

Rector's Letter, October, 2019

Dear brothers and sisters:

These past many years have been full of turmoil in the country and the world. Just when we thought maybe things might get better, bad news at home and around the world presses in on us. But if it seems like we're going through an especially disastrous time, we need more perspective. This is the way the world has run for ages. The disciples wondered about similar disasters 2000 years ago:

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:3-14).

"Wars and rumors of wars.... Famines, pestilences, and earthquakes.... Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold..." — these are the signs of the end of the age, and we see them around us today, but so has every generation since our Lord spoke these words. So we should understand we Christians have always been living in the Last Days, we are always expecting the coming of Jesus Christ as he commanded us.

And we should also understand that, while from a worldly point of view the economy and everything else is mismanaged and spinning out of control, God still manages the divine economy with perfect understanding.

It may seem strange to speak about a "divine economy," but the Fathers do all the time. We tend to translate their words as "dispensation," "providence," or sometimes "stewardship" in English, but the original word is the same we use to speak of the realm of business, jobs and finance. "Economy" at its root means "household management." So the "household" of the United States is not very orderly at the moment. But God has ordered the "household of faith," and that economy is in very good hands. Nothing in

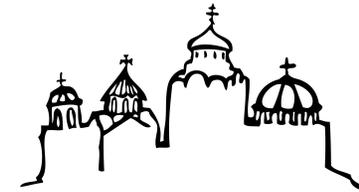
creation is outside his purpose and “all things work together for good” (Romans 8:28).



Of course, we know that not everything seems orderly within the household of faith, either. We see confusion and scandal, and “many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another,” as our Lord warned. And this, too, has always been a part of Christian history. We have had false prophets and faithless leaders, and there has never been a congregation at perfect unity with one another and with the commandments of God. Does this mean that the Church has failed in its mission, that God’s plan of salvation, his “economy,” has failed? Not at all.

God the Father sent his Son into the world to seek and save the lost. The Lord said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but

those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Mark 2:17). Every one of us, whether hierarch or child, comes to church in need of the Physician. We all need to grieve over the ways we have sinned against God and one another.



But we also need to take up our own responsibility. If the Church in the world does not reflect heavenly reality, I must start with myself. How am I helping to heal the world? Am I truly devoting myself to carrying out my part in God’s plan of salvation? If not, what am I doing blaming anyone else?

For the mystery of God’s economy is that he entrusts the daily work to us sinners. We are the stewards of his household, given the job of caring for the world until “the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” We’d better get to work — may God help us!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Joshua S. Modlin

Around the Parish

Last month, **His Eminence, our Archbishop Nikon**, and our dear parishioner **Eleanor Kubeck** fell asleep in the Lord. May their memory be eternal!

We have received a pastoral letter from **His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon**, explaining he will serve as *locum tenens* of the **Diocese of New England** until a new bishop is elected. He will be commemorated as such at our services. All diocesan communication should be directed to our chancellor, Fr. John Kreta.



Everyone soon should be receiving a **Stewardship Packet for 2020** in the mail. Please read it through carefully and consider how to faithfully respond. We rely on your support to carry out the work God has entrusted to us.

The **2019 FORCC Benefit Dinner** will be on Sunday, October 6, at 1 PM, held at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Bridgeport. The guest speaker is Fr. Archimandrite Sergius, Abbot of St Tikhon's Monastery.

40th Day Connecticut Deanery Memorial Service for His Eminence, Archbishop NIKON: On Wednesday evening, Oct. 9, the Eve of the 40th Day of Repose of His Eminence, our Archbishop NIKON, beginning at 7 PM, we will celebrate a solemn Memorial Service ("Panikhida") at Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church, Terryville. All members of the CT Deanery, clergy and lay, are invited to attend and participate in this service. The service will be followed by fellowship time with light refreshments appropriate to a fasting day. Those who wish to bring some food to share are cordially invited to do so. For further information, please contact Fr. John Hopko, Dean of the Connecticut Deanery and Pastor of the Terryville Parish—(860) 582-3631.

A **Chili Cook-Off** will take place Sunday, October 13, following Divine Liturgy. All are welcome to come enjoy a variety of chilis as well as cornbread and desserts, and vote for the winning chili. The event is \$10 per person—children under 12

are free. Anyone interested in entering chili in the competition, please see Sarah Massaro or Donna Leonowich for details.

The annual **Diocesan Assembly** will be hosted by St. Alexis, Clinton, CT, on Oct. 25–26. A number of us from the parish will be participating, so please pray for the Lord to protect us as we travel and to guide our deliberations.

We will have a **Harvest Festival** for the children on Sunday, Oct. 27.



On Sunday, Nov. 3, we will celebrate the annual **Endowment Fund Thanksgiving and Memorial Service** at the conclusion of the Liturgy.

The parish is holding a **Thanksgiving feast** before the Nativity Fast begins. Please join us on Sunday, Nov. 3, following the Divine Liturgy.

We are seeking a manager for our religious items case downstairs in our fellowship

hall. We hope to improve our offerings to our community, to make it better known, more useful and helpful. We do have a modest budget to acquire new items, but we need someone committed to this effort. If you are interested, please speak to Fr. Joshua.

Beyond Our Parish

St. Alexis Orthodox Church, Clinton, as part of their 25th anniversary celebration, hosts a concert by Lyra. We're very excited to welcome these professional musicians and singers for their only Connecticut performance during their current six-week East Coast tour. **ANDREWS MEMORIAL TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM** 54 E Main St, Clinton, CT 06413. **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19 2019 4:00 PM — 5:30 PM.** Ticket prices are \$15 General Admission; \$10 Student (w/ID). Children 12 and younger are free. A Special Rate for student groups is available (\$5 each, (balcony seats). Tickets available online or at the door. Visit <<https://stalexischurch.ticketleap.com>>.

Christ the Savior, Southbury, is again hosting a **St. Nectarios Celebration** on Sunday, Nov. 10, at 4 PM. Please save the date—more details to come.

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