

The Confessor's Tongue for September 27, 2009

16th Sunday after Pentecost; Martyr Callistratus & Companions

In honor of St. Maximus the Confessor, whose tongue and right hand were cut off in an attempt by compromising authorities to silence his uncompromising confession of Christ's full humanity & divinity.

September 27: Holy Martyr Callistratus

St. Callistratus, born in Carthage, was a warrior. His father taught him the Christian faith, and his father learned it from his grandfather Neoscorus who was present with the military command during the suffering of the Savior and who saw with his own eyes His suffering, death, and glorious resurrection. One of the Callistratus troops was the Martyr Gymnasium, who, "loved Christ with firm resolve, and was pierced with zealotry". This holy martyr is hymned in the service for this day together with Martyr Callistratus. The Holy Church in one of its hymns with such a name is turned toward its children: "Let us hymn the passions of Callistratus, Let us celebrate in words the ills of Gymnasium, who suffered with them for a long time, let us bless the faithful with love, and let us cry out to them: O Pious Arms-bearers, intercede to grant us peace and great mercy".

St. Sabbatius, Wonderworker of Solovetski

At first Ven. Sabbatius practiced asceticism as a monk in the St. Cyril-Belozero Monastery. Here his virtuous and strict life received universal respect. But Ven. Sabbatius, fleeing from the humility of human glory left the monastery for the north, where he found Ven. Herman on the Vyg River (see on July 30) and together with him went over to the Solovetski Islands in the midst of the White Sea. Here, "whipping the roots of passions, destroying demonic pressures and driving away all ambushes with the full armor of the cross", both saints practiced asceticism in strict solitude, fasting and prayer. In the words of the Holy Church, Ven. Sabbatius flourished "like a cedar in the desert, increased the flock of sheep through the words of Christ in reverence and truth", destroyed "every increase of passion through abstinence with firm and strong patience" and disgraced "by very opposition everything of arrogance". In the 6th year of his asceticism on Solovetski Island, Ven. Sabbatius, feeling the approach of death, hastened to the main land and peacefully died in 1435, about 10 versts (7 miles) from the mouth of the Vyg River. His relics repose in the Solovetski Monastery.

[The Solovetski monastery flourished for six centuries until it was closed by the new Soviet authorities in 1920 and turned into a corrective labor camp and prison until it in turn was closed in 1940. After the fall of communism, the monastery was returned to the Church and the restoration of monastic life there began. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn donated money from the sale of his books to restore the monastery.]

S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Khar'kov, 1900) pp. pp. 0355-0356. Translated by Archpriest Eugene D Tarris © August 2, 2006. All rights reserved.

Parish Membership & the Annual Meeting

From The Uniform Parish Bylaws of the Diocese of the South, Orthodox Church in America

With the Parish Annual Meeting being held next Sunday, it is fitting that these pertinent extracts be published and read by all before then.

ARTICLE III Membership

Section 1 Definition

Members of the Parish are those persons who:

- a) have been baptized and chrismated in the Orthodox Church and consciously uphold and profess the Orthodox Faith;
- b) are regular communicants, that is, participants in the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion. The term 'regular communicants' means those who partake of the Holy Mysteries frequently, ideally weekly, and no one can be a member of the Parish if he fails to comply with this obligation once a year;
- c) fulfill the financial obligations established by the Parish. All members of the Parish are urged to make a yearly commitment for financial support to the Parish in the form of a pledge, the ideal of which is the tithe of his income.
- d) and declare their intention to be members.

Section 2 Purposes of Membership - Privileges and Obligations of Members.

Following the Tradition of the Church, the purpose of membership in the Parish is to seek the knowledge of God and union with Him through Jesus Christ by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and to express that unity with God in Christ in all religious, moral, family and social activities. Generally, this expression consists of an enlightened obedience to the teachings of the Orthodox Faith, and is manifested in regular attendance at the divine services of the Parish, in frequent reception of the Holy Gifts of the Body and Blood of Christ, in care for the Parish property and buildings, in regular contributions in fulfillment of the financial commitment, and in doing all that is possible to promote the Christian spirit of love, unity and brotherly concern among the members of the Parish.

Section 3 New Members

Any person desiring to become a member of the Parish, and who is baptized and chrismated in the Orthodox Church, must present himself to the rector or priest-in-charge, who will inform him of the life and activities of the Parish. When that person shall have received the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion, he may then declare his intention to become a member of the Parish (the Parish should provide a form for a written declaration), and will be received as such. The pastor and the parish secretary will enter his name in the list of members.

ARTICLE IV The Parish Meeting

Section 1 Authority

The Parish Meeting is the highest legislative, judicial and administrative authority of the Parish as a corporation. All members (as in Article III, Section 1) who have been members of the Parish for a period of six months and are at least eighteen years old may attend and vote at the Parish Meeting.

Section 2 Place of the Parish Meeting

The Parish Meeting must be held on Parish premises.

Section 3 Periodicity of the Parish Meeting

The Parish Meeting is held annually, on a determined Sunday of the year, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

Section 4 Notice of the Parish Meeting

Notice of the annual Parish Meeting shall be given by the rector or priest-in-charge from the ambon at the Divine Liturgy on the three consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the meeting. Notice must also be made at least once in written form, in a special circular or in the parish bulletin, mailed to all voting members of the Parish (See Section 1, Article IV).

Section 5 Competence of the Parish Meeting

Matters pertaining to the life of the Parish that may be discussed and acted upon at the Parish Meeting include:

- a) the approval of the annual operating budget submitted by the Parish Council (Article X) or by a special budget committee;
- b) the election of the Parish Council members, the lay delegate to the Diocesan Assembly, and the lay delegate to the All-American Council, if the latter is to be convened in the current year.
- c) hearing and approving of annual or special reports by committees and parish organizations.
- d) decisions on matters concerning the purchase, improvement or sale of real property, investment of Parish funds (other than in savings accounts), and the use of Parish funds for loans for any purpose;
- e) proposal of resolutions to the Diocesan Assembly, these, if any, to be submitted to the bishop six months prior to the date of the Assembly.

Section 6 Special Parish Meetings

In addition to the annual Parish Meeting, Special Parish Meetings may be convoked by the bishop, the rector or priest-in-charge, or by the Parish Council, with the approval of the rector or priest-in-charge. Voting members of the Parish may petition the rector and the Parish Council to convoke a Special Parish Meeting, such petition requiring the signatures of two thirds of the total number of members.

Special Parish Meetings are called to discuss and act upon specific matters, and no other matter may be discussed at such meetings.

The matters to be discussed and acted upon are to be announced when notice of the Special Meeting is given. Regulations regarding the notice of a Special Parish Meeting are the same as those in Section 4 of this Article.

Section 7 The Quorum for the Annual Parish Meeting and the Special Parish Meetings

The quorum for the annual Parish Meeting shall be no less than 50% of the number of voting members of the Parish.

The quorum for a Special Parish Meeting shall be no less than 33% of the voting membership of the Parish.

In the absence of a quorum at the annual Parish Meeting or at a Special Parish Meeting, said meeting shall be adjourned and reconvened on the same day of the following week, and at this, adjourned, meeting no quorum shall be necessary for a lawful meeting.

Section 8 Voting

A simple majority vote by those voting members in attendance at the Parish Meeting, Annual or Special, shall be decisive on all matters within the competence of the meeting.

Section 9 The Presiding Officer

The rector or the priest-in-charge is the presiding officer of the Parish Meeting, Annual or Special. The warden may also chair parts of the meeting sessions, in accordance with a prior agreement reached between him and the rector and the Parish Council.

Section 10 Confirmation of Minutes

A copy of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting or of a Special Parish Meeting, signed by the rector or priest-in-charge and the warden, shall be sent to the bishop, through the district dean, for confirmation. All decisions and resolutions in those minutes become effective upon receipt of such confirmation.

Orthodox Greetings and Responses

There are several official greetings and responses used among Orthodox Christians. We use festal greetings in the Paschal Season and at the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas) in addition to two others that are used the rest of the year.

We may use one of these greetings whenever we first see someone, but we commonly use a greeting each Sunday when we come to kiss the Cross after Liturgy. As it has been your priest's experience that many of you are not using the response called for by your priest's greeting, those responses are published below so that you may know and use them.

It you are greeted thus, please respond!

Greeting (general for all non-festal seasons):

"Glory to Jesus Christ!" Response: "Glory forever!"

Greeting: "Christ is in our midst!" Response: "He is and ever shall be!" (often used at end of Liturgy)

Greeting (Pascha): "Christ is risen!" Response: "Indeed, He is risen!"

Greeting (Nativity): "Christ is born!" Response: "Glorify Him!"

Upcoming Events 2009

- 4 October, Annual Parish Meeting
- 11 October, Blessing of Automobiles after Liturgy

GLORY BE TO GOD IN ALL THINGS!