WEEKLY BULLETIN

September 20~~,~~ ~~20~~26, Vol. 43, No. 36

16th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday After the Exaltation of the Cross

THE VOICE

SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301

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www.saintelia.com

His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese,Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector

Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Rev. Deacon Aaron Gray

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2026 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Daniel Ralich
Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Reader Daniel Slife
Members: Anastasia Bohush, Anthony Dodovich, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge,

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas
Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School: 2026-2027

Coordinator: Popadia Donna Freude
Staff: Natalie Slife, Eve Tavenie, Mary Marcin, Denise Brito, Frances Hakim Subdeacon David Trace, Sue Ellen Turscak, Dr. Benjamin Czarnota

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

President: Sandy Graham, V. President: Kathy Gray Secretary: Katherine Hodge, Treasurer: Mary Magensky Assistant Treasurer: Anastasia Bohush

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Deacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers 2026

Sunday, September 20 - Reader Joshua Wherley
Sunday, September 27 Mary Beth Gray
Sunday, October 4 - Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

- *SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES*

16th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 7
Afterfeast & Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross
Saturday, September 19
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Luke 24:12-35
Sunday, September 20
9:10 am 3rd & 6th Hours: Reader Joshua Wherley
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Joshua Wherley
Epistles: Galatians 2:16-20 2 Cor. 6:1-10
Gospels: Mark 8:34-9:2 Matthw 25:13-40

17th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 8
Saturday, September 26
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Luke 24:36-53
Sunday, September 27
9:10 am 3rd & 6th Hours: Mary Beth Gray
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Mary Beth Gray
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-17:1
Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

THE PROTECTION OF OUR MOST- HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY
Wednesday, September 30
6:00 pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:1-10

We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.
For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.
We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed.
But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses,

in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;
by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,
by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,y honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true;
as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed;
as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1
When He had called the people to *Himself,* with His disciples also, He said to them, ***"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? [d]For whoever [e]is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.***
And He said to them ***"Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see [b]the kingdom of God [1]present with power."***

Gospel: Matthew 25:14=30

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’ “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my

money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

The Pantocrator Icon

The word *Pantocrator* is of Greek origin meaning "ruler of all". Christ Pantocrator is an icon of Christ. He holds the book of the Gospels in his left hand and blesses with his right hand.

The icon portrays Christ as the Righteous Judge and the Lover of Mankind, both at the same time. The Gospel is the book by which we are judged, and the blessing proclaims God's loving kindness toward us, showing us that he is giving us his forgiveness.

It is the tradition of the Church to depict "God is with us" by having the large Pantocrator icon inside of the central dome, or ceiling of the church. Around the Icon are inscribed the words from Psalm 79(80). The Archbishop prays these words three times as he gives a blessing

“Lord, Lord, look down from heaven and behold and visit this vineyard which Your right hand planted, and perfect it.”

Greatmartyr Eustáthios Placidas, with his wife and children, of Rome

Commemorated on September 20

Before his Baptism, the Holy Great Martyr Eustáthios was named Plakidas (Πλακίδας). He was a Roman General in the reigns of Emperors Titus (79-81) and Trajan (98-117). Even before he came to know Christ, Plakidas devoted himself to charitable endeavors, helping the poor and destitute. Therefore, the Lord did not allow this virtuous pagan to continue in the darkness of idolatry.

One day, while hunting in a forest, he saw a remarkable stag which stopped now and then to stare at him. Plakidas pursued it on horseback, but could not catch up. The stag jumped over a chasm and stood on the other side facing him. Suddenly, Plakidas saw a radiant Cross between its antlers. The General was astonished to hear a voice coming from the Cross saying, "Why do you pursue me, Plakidas?" "Who are You, Master?" asked Plakidas. The voice replied, "I am Jesus Christ, Whom you do not know, but by your good deeds, you honor me. I have appeared here on this creature for your sake, to draw you into the net of my love for mankind.
It is not fitting that one as righteous as you should worship idols and remain ignorant of the truth. It was to save mankind that I came into the world." Plakidas cried

out, “Lord, I believe that You are the God of Heaven and earth, the Creator of all things. Master, teach me what I should do.” Again the Lord replied, “Go to the bishop of your country and receive Baptism from him, and he will instruct you.”

Plakidas returned home and joyfully recounted everything to his wife Tatiana. She in turn told him of a strange dream she had the evening before, in which she had been told, “Tomorrow you, your husband and your sons shall come to me and know that I am the true God.” The couple then proceeded to do as they had been told. They hastened to the Christian bishop, who baptized all their family, and then communed them with the Holy Mysteries. Plakidas was renamed Eustáthios, his wife was called Theopistē, and their children, Agapios and Theopistos. On the following day, Saint Eustáthios went to the place of his miraculous conversion and there he gave thanks to the Lord for having called him to the path of salvation.

Saint Eustáthios received another a miraculous revelation. The Lord Himself predicted his impending tribulations: “Eustáthios, you shall suffer many misfortunes, as did Job, but in the end you will conquer the devil.” Soon Saint Eustáthios was afflicted with misfortune: all of his servants died of the plague, and his cattle perished. Brought to ruin, but not despairing in spirit, Saint Eustáthios and his family secretly abandoned their home, to live in poverty unknown, humble, and

poor. They went to Egypt to board a ship bound for Jerusalem. During the voyage the Saint experienced more sorrow. Captivated by Theopistē's beauty, the ship owner cruelly set Eustáthios and his children ashore, keeping the wife for himself.With great sadness the Saint continued on his way, and new calamity befell him. Coming to a tempestuous river, he went to carry his two sons across in turn. When he brought the first one across, the other was seized by a lion and was carried off into the wilderness. As he turned back to shore, a wolf dragged the other child into the forest. Saint Eustáthios wept bitterly, but he realized that Divine Providence had sent him these misfortunes in order to test his endurance and devotion to God. Saint Eustáthios prepared himself for even more sorrows, knowing that one who endures temptations and has been tested will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him (James 1:12).

In the village of Badessos he found work and spent five years in ceaseless toil. Saint Eustáthios did not know at the time that by God's mercy, shepherds and farmers had rescued his sons, and they were living near him. He was also unaware that the impudent shipowner had been struck down with a terrible disease and died, leaving Saint Theopistē untouched. She lived in peace and freedom at the place where the ship landed.

During this time it had become difficult for Emperor Trajan to raise an army for Rome to deal with a rebellion,

for the soldiers refused to go into battle without Plakidas. They advised Trajan to send men out to all the cities to search for him .Antiochos and Akakios, who were friends of Plakidas, sought him in various places. Finally, they arrived in the village where Saint Eustáthios lived. The soldiers found him, but they did not recognize him. They began telling him about the person they sought, asking for his help and promising him a large reward. Saint Eustáthios recognized his friends right away, but he did not disclose his identity to them. Borrowing money from one of his friends, he prepared a meal for his visitors. As they looked at him, they noticed that he resembled their former commander. When they saw a scar on his shoulder from a deep wound made by a sword, they realized that it was their friend who stood before them. They embraced him with tears and told him why they had been looking for him.

Saint Eustáthios returned to Rome with them and was restored to his former rank. Many new recruits were drafted into the army from all over the Empire. He did not know that the two young soldiers who served him, and whom he loved for their skill and daring, were actually his own sons. They did not realize that they were serving under the command of their own father, nor that they were brothers by birth.

While on campaign, the army led by Eustáthios halted at a certain place. One night, the brothers were talking in their tent. The elder spoke about his life, how he had lost

his mother and brother, and how he had been parted from his father. The younger brother then realized that the other man was his own brother, and revealed how he had been rescued from the wolf.

A woman overheard their conversation, since their tent was pitched right next to her house, and she realized that these were her sons. Without identifying herself to them, but not wishing to be separated from them, she went to their general, Saint Eustáthios, and asked that he take her to Rome with him. She said she had been a prisoner and wanted to go home. Then she came to recognize the general as her husband, and with tears she told him about herself, and about the two soldiers who were their sons. Thus, through God's great mercy, the entire family was reunited.

Soon thereafter, the rebellion was crushed, and Saint Eustáthios returned to Rome with honor and glory. Emperor Trajan had died in the meantime, and his successor Hadrian (117-138) wanted to celebrate the victory with a solemn sacrifice to their "gods." To everyone's amazement, Saint Eustáthios did not go to the pagan temple. The Emperor ordered them to find him and bring him to the temple. “Why don’t you want to worship the gods?” the Emperor inquired. “You, above all others, should offer thanks to them. Not only did they preserve you in war and grant you victory, but they also helped you to find your wife and children.” Saint Eustáthios replied: “I am a Christian and I glorify and give thanks to

Christ, and I offer sacrifice to Him. I owe my life to Him. I do not know or believe in any other God."Outraged, the Emperor ordered him to remove his military belt and brought Eustáthios and his family before him. They did not succeed in persuading the steadfast confessors of Christ to offer sacrifice to idols. The Saint's family was sentenced to be torn to pieces by wild beasts, but the animals would not touch the holy martyrs. Then the cruel Emperor ordered that they be thrown alive into a red-hot brass bull, and Saint Eustáthios, his wife Theopistē, and their sons Agapios and Theopistos suffered martyrdom. Before being placed inside the bull, Saint Eustathios prayed, "Grant, O Lord, Thy grace to our relics, and grant a place in Thy Kingdom to all who call upon us, Though they call upon us when in danger on a river, or on the sea, we entreat Thee to come to their aid." Three days later, they opened the brass bull, and the bodies of the holy martyrs were found unscathed. Not one hair of their heads was singed, and their faces shone with an unearthly beauty. Many who witnessed this miracle came to believe in Christ. Some pious Christians buried the bodies of the Saints with all honor and reverence

MEMORY ETERNAL

In blessed repose grant eternal rest, O Lord, to the soul of your departed servant **Anthony** and make his **Memory Eternal..**

Please remember his daughter Emily Czarnota and his wife Maureen in your prayers.

SISTERHOOD OF SAINT JULIANA MEETING St. Elia's Sisterhood will meet today, Sunday, September 20, following the DivineLiturgy.

PARISH COUNCILNOMINATING COMMITTEE

Please present your Nominees to **Nominating Committee: Sandy Graham, Mary Marcin, Reader Joshua Wherley.**

The slate of nominees will be presented at a Parish Meeting in November for election. All Nominations must be made to the Nominating Committee before the Parish Meeting. **Nominations cannot be made at the November Meeting.**

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE

The 63rd Diocesan Conference will be held at Saint Elizabeth the New Martyr Church, Perrysburg, Ohio, **October 9-10**. Fr. Don, Deacon Aaron, and Jefferson Hodge, our Delegate, will be representing St. Elia Parish.

AKRON 5K MARATHON - SATURDAY, OCT 17
TO BENEFIT IOCC
Hosted by St. Elia in conjunction with COCA

OUR STEWARSHIP, September 13, 2026

Candles:	**89.00**
Tray Offerings:	**1,278.00**
Tithely Offerings:	**446.50**
TOTAL:	**$1,813.50**

REMEMBER THOSE IN ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr. Don and Popadia Donna

Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila

Christopher Barnhart, son of Diego and Chanelle

REMEMBER OUR SICK AND SHUT-INS

Metropolitan Onuphry of the Ukraine

Metropolitan Theodosy of the Ukraine

Metropolitan Arseny of the Ukraine

Archbishop Benjamin

Archbishop Nathaniel

Archpriest Emil Huntyan

Matushka Laryssa Hnntyan

Mitred Archpriest Daniel Kovalak

Matushka Myra Kovalak

Priest Gabriel Bilas, Matushka Laura Bilas

Priest Wayne Paul Wright

Matushka Christine Zebren

Matushka Valerie Zahirsky

Florence Lambo

Michele Lambo

Mary Magensky

Sarah Nigilo

Melissa Trace

Frances Hakim

Louis Hakim

Joey Gresh

Halina Woroncow

Joseph Taylor

Sofia Wsevolodov

David Gable

Parish Picnic in the Park

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH
following Divine Liturgy

Meet us at the park for food, fun and fellowship as a parish community. Tennis courts, playground, trails and covered pavillion included.

Columbia Woods Park
4060 Columbia Woods Dr.
Norton, OH

Scan here to RSVP and let us know what you're bringing!