

Him. And the *clergy* represent this continuity, this identity of the Church in doctrine, life and grace throughout space and time. They teach the same eternal teaching, they bring to us the same eternal Christ, they announce the same and eternal Saving Act of God.

Without this hierarchical structure the Church would become a purely human organization reflecting the various ideas, tastes, choices of men. She would cease to be the Divine Institution, God's gift to us. But then "laity" could not be "laity"— the People of God — any more, there would be no *Amen* to be said, for where there is no gift there can be no acceptance... The mystery of Holy Orders in the Church is that which makes the whole Church truly and fully the Laos, the Laity, the very People of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Donations for our Aug. 13 Garage Sale are being accepted each and every Sunday until Aug. 7. Our "Giving From the Heart" for the month of August will be school supplies. If you would like to donate and assist many students begin their new school year with supplies needed, a list of items suggested will be posted in the church lobby and in the coffee room.

JULY 24 DONATIONS: For Health of (FHO): FAMILY ANGIE PANZOFF, PETE & JANN PETROFF, ALEKSYNAS FAMILY, TOM & CHERYL TANASOFF;

In Memory of (IMO): VANA & DONO SEKULIDIS – DONNA SEKULIDIS & MARY TODOROFF; IMO: RICHARD OKONONSKI & KATHY TRUE – DONNA SEKULIDIS; IMO: RICHARD CARTER – MARY TODOROFF

UPCOMING EVENTS:

AUG 7 LADIES GUILD MTG – following Divine Liturgy

12 – Set up for GARAGE SALE & BAKING for Garage Sale

13 – GARAGE & BAKE SALE

21 – Church Council Meeting

SAINT PAUL ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Rector: Rev. Fr. Robert J. Royer Email: robertjroyer@gmail.com
(810) 919-9485 Website: stpaulorthodoxcathedral.org

Sunday, July 31st
6th Sunday after Pentecost



**TODAY WE WILL CELEBRATE THE DIVINE LITURGY OF
ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM**



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle – Romans 12:6-14

Brothers and sisters, Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Gospel – Matthew 9:1-8

At that time Jesus got into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" -- he then said to the paralytic -- "Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann Clergy and Laity in the Orthodox Church (part 3)

The Place of Clergy

It is this Orthodox understanding of the "laity" that discloses the real meaning and function of *clergy*. In the Orthodox Church clergy is not *above* laity or *opposed* to it. First of all, strangely at it may seem, the basic meaning of term clergy is very close to that of laity. Clergy comes from "clerus" which means the "part of God". "Clergy" means that part of mankind that belongs to God, has accepted His call, has dedicated itself to God. In this initial meaning the whole Church is described as "clergy"—

part or inheritance of God: "O God, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance": (*kleronomia* or clergy — in Greek). The Church because She is the People of God (laity) is His "part", His "inheritance".

But gradually the term "clergy" was limited to those who fulfilled a special ministry within the People of God, who were especially set apart to serve on behalf of the whole community. For, from the very beginning, the People of God was not amorphous but was given by Christ Himself a structure, an order, a hierarchical shape:

"And God has set some in the Church, first apostles, secondary prophets, thirdly teachers... Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?... Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular..." (1 Cor. 12:28-29)

Historically the Church was built on the Apostles, whom Christ Himself has elected and appointed. The Apostles again elected and appointed their own helpers and successors, so that throughout the whole uninterrupted development of the Church, there has always been the *continuity* of this Divine appointment and election.

The "clergy" therefore is needed to make the Church what she has to be: the special *People* or *Part of God*. Their special function is to perpetuate within the Church that which does not depend on men: the Grace of God, the Teaching of God, the commandments of God, the saving and healing power of God. We stress this "of God" for the whole meaning of "clergy" lies precisely in their total identification with the objective teaching of the Church. It is not *their* teaching or *their* power: they have none, but that which has been kept and perpetuated in the Church from the Apostles down to our own time and which constitutes the essence of the Church. The Priest has the power to teach, but only inasmuch as he teaches the Tradition of the Church, and is completely obedient to it. He has the power to celebrate, but again, only inasmuch as he fulfills the eternal Priesthood of Christ Himself. He is bound — totally and exclusively — by the Truth which he represents and, thus, can never speak or command in his own name.

Our people in their criticism of the clergy fear the excessive "power" of clergy, yet too often they do not realize that the priest represents nothing else than the "Power" of the Church, of which they are members and not any specific "clerical" power. For it is clear to everybody that the Church existed before we were born and has always existed as a body of doctrine, order, liturgy, etc. It does not belong to anyone of us to change the Church or to make it follow our own taste, for the simple reason that we *belong* to the Church, but the Church does not belong to us. We have been mercifully accepted by God into His household, made worthy of His Body and Blood, of His Revelation, of Communion with