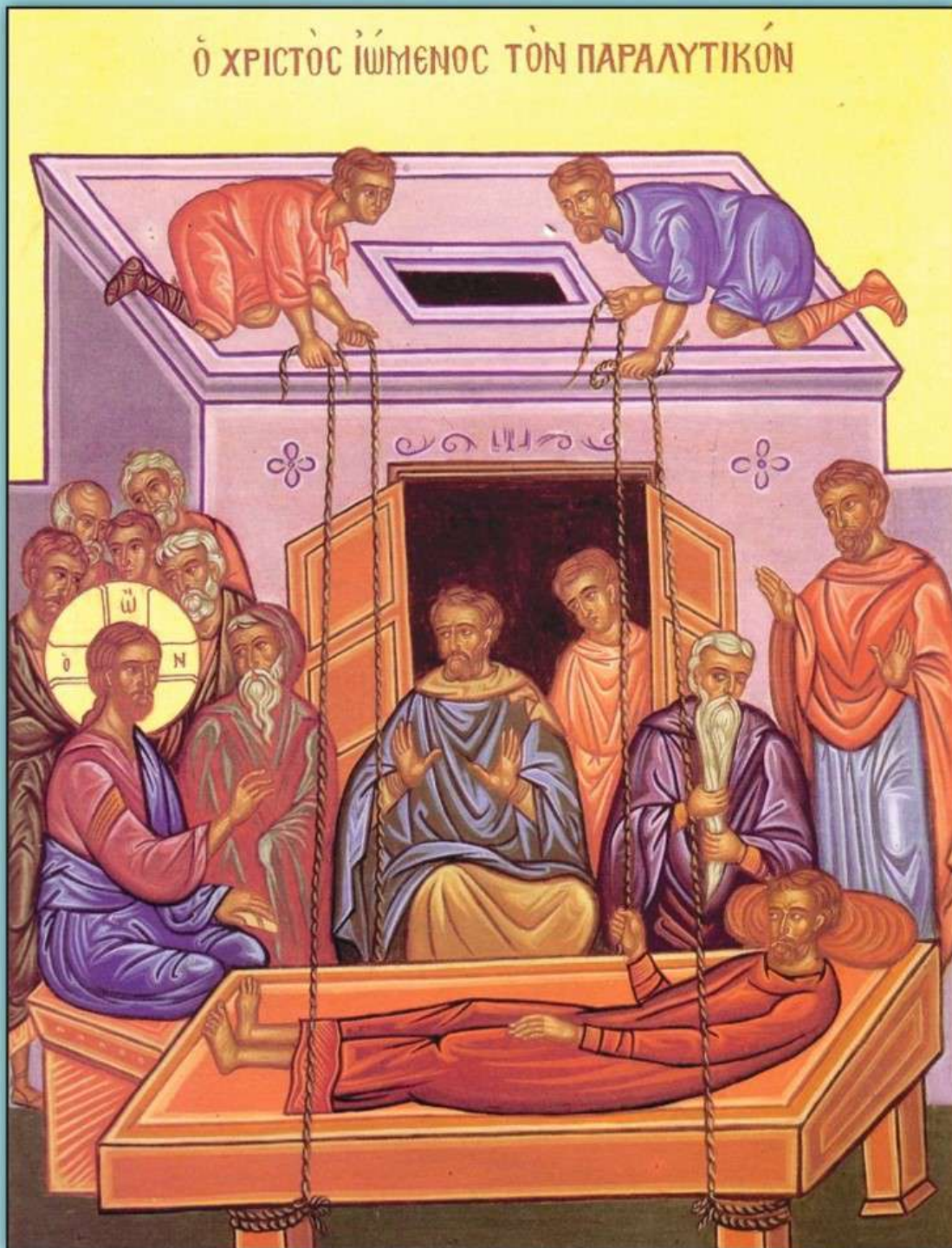
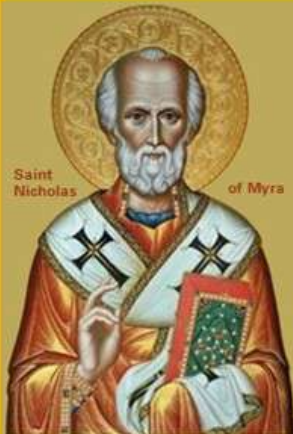


SECOND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS



Icon of Healing the Paralytic

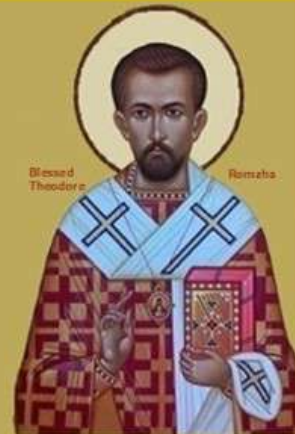


**ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*2200 Arctic Boulevard
Anchorage, AK 99503*

**BL. THEODORE ROMZHA
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC MISSION**

*Sacred Heart Church 1201 E Bogard Rd,
Wasilla, AK 99654
2nd and 4th Sundays of the month*



Administration

His Eminence, Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla DD
Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Kurt Burnette for
Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix

Parish Administration: Reverend Father Vasyl Mutka

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 10am-4pm (Please Call before coming to the office)

Phone: (907) 277-6731

E-mail: pastorstnicholas@yahoo.com

www.ak-byz-cath.org



WELCOME TO ALL PARISHIONERS & GUESTS WHO HAVE JOINED US TODAY

Whether you're searching for a new church home or just visiting, we're glad you're with us today. If you are looking for God, have a prayer request, looking for more information about the Eastern Catholic Church, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr. Vasyl, he will be happy to talk to you. Please join us for our coffee hour in the Parish hall following the Divine Liturgy. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

Schedule of Services

FEBRUARY 25—MARCH 3, 2024

Sunday, February 25—Second Sunday of the Great Fast

9:40 am 3rd Hour

10:00 am Divine Liturgy *For parishioners, founders, donors, decorators of our
St. Nicholas Parish & Wasilla Mission and for their relatives*

3:15-3:45 pm Confessions

4:00 pm Divine Liturgy in Wasilla

Monday, February 26

9:00 am The Office of the Great Fast

Tuesday, February 27

9:00 am The Office of the Great Fast

Wednesday, February 28

6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Thursday, February 29

No Services

Friday, March 1

6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, March 2—Third All-Souls' Saturday (commemoration of the departed)

9:00 am Divine Liturgy (After Liturgy Panachida with reading of names)

4:15-4:45 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Vespers/Divine Liturgy *For John Hampson by David & Judy Bich*

Sunday, March 3—Third Sunday of the Great Fast (Veneration of the Holy Cross)

9:40 am 3rd Hour

10:00 am Divine Liturgy *For parishioners, founders, donors, decorators of our
St. Nicholas Parish & Wasilla Mission and for their relatives*



Please remember in your prayers:

For health and salvation: Fr. Chris Zugger, Veronica Frazier, David Bich, Denise, Ed, Dennis, Max, Aniela, Ken Wake, Molly Buggy, Kim Bryan, Shawn,

For repose of the departed: +Bishop Gerald N Dino, +Fr. Michael Artim, +Christine Vincent, Corine Hurst,

Please re-submit names of people you wish to place on the prayer list for 2024. You can send names by email: pastorstnicholas@yahoo.com. In front of the names of the departed, please put a "+" symbol. Please pray also for all our benefactors, friends, neighbors, and anyone we may have forgotten.

Great Lenten Confession: We are in the time of the Great Fast. Our Christian duty is to take care of people: sick, infirm, elderly, etc. If you know someone who needs a pastoral visit of a Byzantine Catholic priest and would like to have a confession, and receive a Holy Communion, please talk to Fr. Vasyl. Thank you.



We are asking for help to cover the cost of replacing several lighting devices in the hallway, in the sacristy, and in the rectory. Total cost is \$354.00 Thank you.



The third Sunday of Great Lent in our Church is the Sunday of Veneration of the Holy Cross. This Sunday we decorate the cross and display it for veneration. If you would like to make a donation for the flowers to decorate the Holy Cross, please use a special envelope "Flower offering" that you can find at the Welcome table. Thank you.

All Souls Saturdays: We have 5 All Souls Saturdays (3 remaining) to commemorate our dead relatives. The third All Souls Saturday will be on March 2nd, 2024. Envelopes "All Souls Saturdays" are available in the narthex of the church. Please write clearly the names of the departed you wish to be remembered on a special offering envelope and drop it in the collection basket on Sunday or just give it to Father Vasyl. Thank you.

ECF: Next Sunday, March 3, we will have an **Adult ECF class** at 12:30 p.m. Adults and young adults are encouraged to attend as part of their spiritual development. All are welcome.

Catholic Community Services: Please continue to bring non-perishable foods to the parish hall for distribution to those in need through Catholic Community Services. Thank you.

Sunday Coffee Hour: Dear parishioners, every Sunday we have Putlock. Please bring your favorite food for sharing. Thank you for your open-heartedness.



2024 Kodiak Island

BISON HUNT RAFFLE



2018 Winners Brittany Brown & Cassie Rogers of North Pole, Alaska

PRIZE DESCRIPTION

- Guided hunt on "Kodiak Game Ranch", Kodiak Island
- Guaranteed 2 to 4-year-old bull (Head, meat, and hide)
- Up to three day's meals and lodging with ground transportation during hunt
- No hunting license required (private ranch)
- Travel to and from Kodiak not included.
- Hunt scheduling to be arranged by winner (Optimum period is September through January)

OR

- \$3,500 CASH

Drawing is 10 AM, May 12, 2024, at St. Ann's Hall, Co-Cathedral of Nativity of BVM in Juneau

One drawing for each 1300 Tickets Sold!

Ticket Price \$20.00 - Tickets are transferable - Need not be present to win.

The proceeds benefit Knights of Columbus charitable works in Alaska.

Alaska Permit # 1631 - Winners posted at www.alaskakofcstate.com.

Winners of 2023 Raffle were Connie Srebernak, Wasilla; Greg Guay, Anchorage; Rose Wages, Fairbanks; Michael O'Brien, Bristol CT; Louis Menendez, Juneau; Jason Carter, Wasilla.

For tickets contact Fr. Vasyl

ANSWERING GOD'S CALL: "Arise, take up your mat and go to your house." Our Lord healed the paralysis of the suffering man brought through the roof. His words of healing centered on spiritual healing by forgiving his sins. In response to God's love and forgiveness, are you being called to a life of prayer and intercession as a religious, monastic, or a priestly life? Contact the Vocations Office at 206-329-9219 or email: vocations@ephx.org

Vocation Icon:



Prayer for Vocations

Lord our God, older than all creation, you have made us in your image and likeness.

You have given us the gift of the Holy Spirit through your servants who proclaim the good news of your Church all that is necessary for our sanctification.

We humbly beg you, do not leave your people deprived of spiritual gifts, but grant us an abundance of vocations to your holy priesthood, the diaconate and consecrated life, and to lives dedicated to your service.

Open the hearts of men and women to hear your words, "Come, follow me!"

Indeed, do not leave us orphans, but be with us through your Holy Spirit, who is present everywhere and fills all things, and who raises up mere mortals to divine service by the mystery of his grace.

Truly you will never forget your promise to be with us always, until the end of the world, but forgive us if we have, in our weakness, failed to follow you as we should.

For you alone are holy now and ever and forever. Amen.

Reflections on the present Scriptures: In this case, they both approached Him, and had faith required on their part. For "Seeing," it is said, "their faith" - that is, the faith of those who let the man down ...as they evinced such great faith - He also evinces His own power ...He first healed that which is invisible, the soul, by forgiving his sins ...In fact, in His abundance of counsel, He made use of (the scribes') envy for the manifestation of the miracle.

St. John Chrysostom

God's providence guides history symbolically. Salvation History in the Book of Jonah

Adapted from an Orthodox source

The Prophet Jonah is most known for his three days in the belly of the great fish, which clearly foreshadowed the Lord's three days in the belly of the earth. As Jonah was then spewed forth from the beast, so Christ then

arose. The Lord Himself speaks of this "sign of the Prophet Jonah" five times in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and the entire book of the Prophet Jonah is read in the Divine Liturgy for Holy Saturday. But every word of Scripture is Divinely inspired by God, and there are other images and lessons we can take from the short book of the Prophet Jonah.

Just as Jonah's life ties to that of the Incarnate Christ, so it also parallels events that came before, and foreshadows events that came after the Resurrection. The Scriptures show us that God is not simply the author of literary symbolism, but, in fact, He fills all of creation and history with symbolism that reveals His presence and the truth of the Christian faith. Scripture depicts history symbolically because God's providence guides history symbolically.

Sodom and Gomorrah and Nineveh

The book of Jonah begins: *Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai* (Jon. 1:1), and this formula is repeated after Jonah's misadventure at sea (3:1). God calls upon Jonah to preach repentance to Nineveh, *for their wickedness is come up before me* (1:2).

First, it is notable that the Lord does not *simply* speak to Jonah, but rather *the word of the LORD came unto Jonah*, which at least hints at a "separate" existence of the word of the Lord. As Christians enjoying the fullness of the revelation of God, we can see indications of the Holy Trinity already in the Old Testament. As the Gospel of John tells us explicitly, Christ is the hypostatic Word of God, and according to our Tradition, it was the pre-incarnate Christ Who appeared to the prophets.

Similarly, when three angels visit Abraham at the Oak of Mamre, we are told that *the LORD appeared unto him* (Gen. 18:1). Later, the LORD speaks of the grievous sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose cry is great, which *is come unto Me* (18:20-21).

Thus, we see that Nineveh is a new Sodom and Gomorrah, only, while not even ten righteous could be found in Sodom and Gomorrah and their continued sin led to their destruction, the entire city of Nineveh was eager to fast and repent, from the king down to the animals, and so it was spared (and in fact, because it was spared, Nineveh, as the capital of the Assyrian Empire, later became the instrument by which the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah were ravaged).

The self-emptying of the king

Jonah 3:6-7 shows us that the king of Nineveh not only proclaimed a fast for the entire city, but he himself also *arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes*. The king didn't stand aloof from his people, but identified himself with them and joined them in their lowliness.

Continued on Page 6

Continued from Page 5

Likewise, Christ the King laid aside His glory, covered Himself with the form of a servant, *and was made in the likeness of men* (Phil. 2:7), who are made of the dust of the earth.

Another Adam

Returning to God's initial call to Jonah, we see that he flees from the presence of the LORD. This clearly hearkens back to Adam and Eve who heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day and hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God (Gen. 3:8).

As Jonah was swallowed by the great fish for his flight from God—an image of death—so Adam and Eve, and all us after them, began to die, often depicted in Scripture as being swallowed up by the earth.

Conversely, Christ descended into the belly of the earth not because He had fled from God, but precisely because He perfectly obeyed God. Thus, though He died in His human nature, Christ was not swallowed up by death, but rather He swallow[ed] up death in victory (Is. 25:8).

Who redeemeth thy life from corruption

While Jonah is a new Adam in that he imitates his desire to hide from God, as we have already said, His life also foretells that of Christ, Who is the New Adam in that He brings life rather than death.

After he is delivered from the belly of the great fish, the Prophet Jonah proclaims: *Thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God* (Jon. 2:6). This echoes Psalm 102:4, which glorifies the God *Who redeemeth thy life from corruption*, which is sung as the First Antiphon in the Divine Liturgy—the celebration of the Lord's Resurrection.

While Jonah was redeemed from corruption, God did not suffer [His] Holy One to see corruption at all, as the holy Apostle Paul preached, quoting another Psalm (15:10). As the Lord of Glory, Christ's Body did not undergo any corruption, though it lay in the grave.

Calming the sea

The direct occasion for Jonah to be cast into the sea and swallowed by the beast is the *great tempest* that the Lord sends, which threatens the life of every man onboard the ship sailing for Tarshish. When the shipmaster sees that Jonah is sleeping while all the other mariners and passengers are crying out to their respective gods, he says: *What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not* (Jon. 1:4-6).

There is also a *great tempest* in the life of the Savior, when He is crossing the Sea of Galilee with His disciples (Mt. 8:23-27, Mk. 4:35-41, Lk. 8:22-25). Christ too is asleep on the boat and has to be awoken by the others, who also fear for their lives as did the men who were sailing with Jonah. But where the men implored the Prophet Jonah to call upon his God, the Disciples approach Christ differently, not imploring Him to call out to God, but rather imploring Him to save them Himself.

Christ calms the storm, and the Disciples marvel, saying, *What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!* (Mt. 8:27), just as the sea had obeyed the Lord in Jonah's time, causing the men to marvel in awe before Him (Jon. 1:15-16).

A willing sacrifice

And as Jonah willingly offers himself up as sacrifice (Jon.

1:12) and so descends into the belly of the fish, so Christ is our sacrifice, willingly descending into the belly of the earth.

The Great Commission

Finally, we can see several points in which the historical story of the Prophet Jonah points ahead to the Great Commission, given by the Lord to His holy Apostles (Mt. 28:19-20). God's call to Jonah to *Arise, go to Nineveh* (Jon. 1:2) parallels the call to the Disciples to *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations* (Mt. 28:19). And their message is the same: Repentance. On the day of Pentecost, the holy Apostle Peter cries out: *Repent, and be baptized* (Acts 2:38).

Jonah's deliverance from the watery depths and the corruption and "death" of the belly of the fish parallels the Baptism preached by St. Peter, which plunges us into Christ's death in the waters of the Sacrament, and raises us again to new life, offering us deliverance from sin and death. After undergoing this type of Baptism, Jonah is ready to obey the Lord.

Though he initially rejects God's call, he does, in the end, preach the word of God to the people of Nineveh, and they receive it and are spared destruction. Likewise, although the Apostles abandoned and betrayed the Lord when He was given up to death, they did, in the end, heed His call and preach the word of God throughout the known world, converting millions, who were thus spared spiritual destruction. Finally, the Lord's word to the Apostles that *I am with you always, even unto the end of the world* (Mt. 28:20) is foreseen in God's constant care for Jonah, both when the prophet disobeys and then obeys Him, and even when He is despondent and entreats the Lord to take his life (Jon. 4:3).

Thus, we see that the whole of salvation history is woven throughout the life of the Prophet Jonah, which hearkens back to Adam and ahead to Christ and the Apostles, and to the path of every one of us in the Church. When it comes to the God of history, symbolism is no mere literary device, but is rather the manifestation of God's presence and providence, calling us to faith and salvation.

NATIONAL BYZANTINE RALLY

WALKING ON THE WATERS

SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

June 27-30, 2024

Will you step out of the boat?

Parish Giving

Great news for those donating online

Now you can use our new online giving tool to tithe online using your credit card or bank account information. You can also do a one-time donation or set up weekly donations! You will receive a receipt and statement immediately after donating. The software takes a very small percentage of the donation, but its worth it for the ease of the system. You can donate using your computer at:

<https://donorbox.org/support-st-nicholas-and-help-us-grow>



Tithes & Attendance:

February 11
Tithes: \$850.00
Candles: \$232.25
Food: \$36.00
Attendance: 39

February 18
Tithes: \$980.00
Gift shop: \$49.00
Candles: \$40
Attendance: 36

Thank you for your support and love for our Parish.

Also, feel free to send in your regular tithe check by mail to:
**2200 Arctic Blvd,
Anchorage, AK 99503.**

It is very important that we continue to give a percentage of what Our Lord has given us, and continue to support the structure and ministry of the parish. Thank you!



Fred Meyer Rewards: St. Nicholas of Myra participates in the community rewards program with Fred Meyer stores which gives a percentage of purchases by those signed up with the program to **St. Nicholas**. It does not cost anything for customers. Fred Meyer pays out each quarter and will send a check if it's above a certain amount.

It won't cost parishioners and friends of **St. Nicholas** anything to participate. The steps to participate are:

- 1) Set up a Fred Meyer Rewards account if you don't have one or sign up at one of the stores.
 - 2) Set up an online account.
 - 3) Log into the account and search for Community Rewards.
 - 4) Search for **Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church** or our account number **QD147** and select as the charity to receive the funds.
 - 5) Shop at Fred Meyer as you normally would and the St. Nicholas account will automatically be credited.
- Thank you!

PASTORAL MINISTRY AND SACRAMENTS:

SACRAMENT of CONFESSIONS: on Sundays and Holy Days: 30 min. before Divine Liturgy and other days, by appointment.

HOLY COMMUNION: for the sick, by appointment, anytime.

BAPTISMS - by appointment.

MARRIAGES - by appointment, at least 6 months in advance.

FUNERALS - by appointment.

ANOINTING of the sick, hospital visits - by appointment, anytime

Safe Environment:

The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions, and programs, is committed to assuring a Safe Environment in ministry for its children and vulnerable adults that conforms to the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. For additional information regarding the eparchial Safe Environment Program or to report any concerns, please contact:

Subdeacon Paul Kilroy, Safe Environment Program Coordinator

Cell: (480) 745-0316 ~ Office: (602) 861-9778 ext. 204 ~ Email: sbdcnkilroy@ephx.org -

or -

Victim Assistance Coordinator, Deacon Michael Hanafin

Cell: (480) 307-5182 ~ Email: vac@ephx.org

You are Forgiven and Healed

In Capernaum Jesus is surrounded by great numbers of people. As He preaches to the crowd, four friends of a paralyzed man lower him on his mat through the roof so that he can be close enough for Jesus to see him and cure him. Jesus responds to this act of faith, not by healing the man immediately, but by touching off the first of a series of controversial dialogues with the Scribes and Pharisees. When Jesus says, "Child, your sins are forgiven," He is as much as saying, "It is God whom you approach." In the Old Testament, only God is capable of forgiving sins; and it was expected that He would do so only at the end of time. It becomes clear why the Scribes murmur "he is blaspheming" and why Jesus brings it all out in the open. His claim to be able to forgive sins better reveals His identity as Son of God than do the miracles He performs.

Aware of the silent censure His forgiving word has caused in the crowd, Jesus proceeds to prove that "the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" by commanding the man to rise and walk in the sight of everyone. In concluding this miracle, Mark asks his readers to praise God for His presence in their midst as the forgiver-healer, just as the crowd did, even in the face of those who did not believe.

It is significant that Mark has chosen to present this miracle and teaching about Jesus' power to forgive sins so early in his Gospel drama. It shows that the need for the experience of God's forgiveness was as important to first-century Christians as it is today. Mark's readers praise God for saying clearly, and even today, "My sons, my daughters, I absolve you from your sins."

**For publications on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.ecpubs.com**