

CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF NOVEMBER 5, 2006

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH

21ST SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Prayers for the Healing Ministries
Coffee Hour

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

7:00p.m. Vespers

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH

ARCHANGEL MICHAEL & BODILESS POWERS

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH

SAINT NECTARIOS OF AEGINA

9:00a.m. Akathist

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH

6:00p.m. Vespers

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH

22ND SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour
Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council Meeting

Sunday, November 12th, following the Divine Liturgy. Those offering reports at the meeting are asked to distribute their reports in advance.

The Nativity Fast

begins November 15th and ends December 25th, please see page two for fasting guidelines.

The Harvest Ball

raised approximately \$880.00 for our building fund. Many thanks to all who helped make this evening possible!

The Second Annual Diocesan Assembly

was held this past Wednesday, November 1, 2006, at St. Vladimir Church in Trenton, New Jersey. Fr. John will be offering an oral report to the Parish Council at its next meeting but all parishioners are welcome and invited to speak with Fr. John about the Assembly.

Election Day, 2006

is Tuesday, November 7th. The Church, recalling the Lord's admonition to be in the world but not of the world, urges Her faithful to vote in a manner which reflects the high standards of our Christian faith and morality. For information on the candidates, vote-smart.org, is an excellent and unbiased resource. For commentary on contemporary social and moral issues, please see orthodoxytoday.org.



GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

The Orthodox Church sets certain guidelines for members to prepare themselves for the joyous partaking of Holy Communion. These are:

1. Attendance at Church services the night before Liturgy.
2. Observance of the fasting regulations of the Church.
3. A recent confession of sins and absolution from a priest.
4. Fasting from all food, drink (including water), and smoking from midnight on the day which Holy Communion is to be received.
NOTE: One should not fast from medications, or food or drink recommended by a doctor.
5. Abstinence from sexual relations the night before Liturgy and on the day of receiving Holy Communion.
6. Reading of the appointed prayers before and after receiving Holy Communion.

Questions or special circumstances? Please speak with your priest.

ASK FATHER: 3 QUESTIONS / 3 ANSWERS

Q. Father, what is the proper way to greet a priest? Are we supposed to kiss his hand? And if so, how do we do this?

A. In the Orthodox Church priests are greeted in a special way. When we come to a priest (or bishop) we should ask his blessing by putting our right hand over our left hand and saying, "Father bless!" (for a bishop, "Master bless!"). Our hands, one over the other, make the image of the cross. The priest then makes the sign of the cross over the person and places his hand in their cupped hands. The person then kisses the priest's hand, as the priest says, "God bless you!" or "May the Lord bless!"



Saint John Chrysostom

"If one were to meet an Orthodox priest walking with an angel, then one should greet the priest first and kiss his hand, since that hand has touched the Body and Blood of our Lord."

Q. In today's modern world, should an Orthodox Christian still ask a priest for a blessing and kiss his hand? This looks strange to outsiders. Wouldn't it be better just to shake the priest's hand?

Receiving a Bishop's Blessing

When receiving a blessing from a bishop, one should make a small bow before asking for the blessing. A small bow is made by bending at the waist and touching the floor with the right hand. It is not necessary for the elderly to make a bow, nor for anyone to make the sign of the cross before receiving a blessing, either from a bishop or a priest.



A. When a priest gives a blessing he arranges the fingers of his right hand in a specific pattern. His fingers form the Greek initials of "Jesus Christ" – IC XC (see the diagram on the left). This shows that the priest imparts, not his own blessing, but the blessing of Christ, Whom he serves. For this reason, the Church teaches that even in today's modern world, one should not exchange the opportunity to receive God's blessing for a mere handshake.

Q. When should one receive a blessing from a priest?

A. One should ask the priest for a blessing: 1) when one greets him or says goodbye, and 2) during the appointed times in church, for example, after being anointed with oil, at the end of Compline, or after Confession. One should not receive the blessing of a priest, when in the presence of a bishop; instead one should receive a blessing from the bishop.



NATIVITY FAST GUIDELINES		
<i>Days:</i>	<i>Abstinence of:</i>	<i>No Abstinence of:</i>
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday	Meat and Meat Products Dairy Products	Fish, Wine and Oil, Fruits and Vegetables
Wednesday, Friday	Meat and Meat Products Dairy Products Fish, Wine and Oil	Fruits and Vegetables
Note: From December 13-24 inclusive, as the Fast becomes stricter, wine and oil are permitted only on Saturdays and Sundays. Also, fish is not permitted on any day during this period. Questions or special circumstances? Please speak with your priest.		

LESSONS FROM MEDICAL SCIENCE: SIMPLE AND COMPOUND FRACTURES

A simple fracture is a break in the bone. A compound fracture is a sharp break in the bone and a puncture of the skin. This puncture allows exposure to organisms and a high risk of infection. Simple fractures heal faster than compound fractures.



In the spiritual life, we also experience simple and compound fractures. We experience hurt, trauma, pain and spiritual breaks. The causes can be many and varied. Sin is the break and the grace of God provides us with healing.

Compound fractures in the spiritual life are at a greater risk. Here infection and exposure take place. That is, the demons capitalize on our (simple) spiritual break and compound it. How? By making our spiritual state all the worse. One of the chief ways this is done is to convince us that 1) that the spiritual problem or break is not so great; 2) that we can take care of it ourselves without resorting to God.

How many souls there are that are fractured and only complicate their condition by not returning to God! A simple fracture will eventually heal itself. A compound fracture requires the skill of the physician. Jesus Christ is our Chief Physician and Healer. We need to see our condition and go to Him.

We must not compound our sins. We need to go to the Mysteries of Confession and Holy Communion. When we think that we are okay and don't need to go to church; that we don't need frequent Confession; that we can manage on our own; when in moments of clarity we see our souls badly damaged and do nothing about it – we are victims of compound fracture.

The Church is the Hospital; the Physician is our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the place and He is the One to heal us.



"BE A GIVER — CHEERFUL ONE"

Homily by Fr. James C. Meena

St. Paul says "Do not forget thin sowing means thin reaping. The more you sow the more you reap". (II Cor. 9:6) You don't need to be a farmer or live in an agrarian society to understand the meaning of this. There are house plants in almost every home, gardens in almost every yard and you know that if you are stingy with the seeds that you plant, then the earth is going to be stingy in its returns.

If you plant sparingly you will harvest sparingly. And if you give grudgingly to those who need your support, if you give grudgingly to the charitable works of the Church, if you pay your dues grudgingly, if you respond to our appeals for charity grudgingly, then God is not pleased. "God loves a cheerful giver".



Illness is a condition of brokenness, sickness, disease, or some other ailment. *Spiritual illness is caused by sin (separation from God). Every sin is a repetition of Adam's sin, and with every sin we undergo the darkening and dying of the soul. It remains unconfessed, spiritual illness will remain untreated thus leading to death.*



Therapy is the treatment of illness or disability by means of a curative or rehabilitative process. *Spiritual therapy is found in the Church, where Jesus Christ is the Chief Physician. Healing is imparted when we ask the Physician for healing in Confession, follow the "doctor's orders" by keeping the Commandments, and with due preparation partake of His divine medicine in Holy Communion.*



Health is a condition of wholeness or soundness, free from disease or ailment. *To be healthy spiritually means to be free from the disease and brokenness of sin by being united to God and in good relation to our neighbor, and ourselves. Spiritual health was the condition of Adam before the Fall, and thanks to the redemptive work of Christ it can be our condition as well, should we desire to undergo the therapy offered by the Church.*

When I was a little boy my parents did not give me an allowance. Every time I needed something I had to ask for it. If my father gave happily, then I was happy. But, if he was upset about something or if he was distracted or impatient and he gave me the money grudgingly, I felt bad. If we give happily, then God is happy with us, but if we give grudgingly, God is not happy with us. This is what St. Paul is saying to us. He is saying also that there is an example that comes to us from God about giving cheerfully, "because there is no limit to the blessings which God can send you. He will always make sure that you will have all you need for yourselves in every circumstance, and still have something to spare for all sorts of good works."

god loves a cheerful giver

Now how about you in this hubbub of a society, the self-centered ego maniacal society in which we live, in which the primary credo is "Gratify yourself. Make yourselves happy. Get everything you can out of life." Isn't that a real contradiction of the things which we understand to be the teachings of Christ: to go outside of ourselves, to help others, to do good for others, and to do it happily, cheerfully and not grudgingly because "God loves a cheerful giver?"

St. Paul goes on to make another promise, He says "Now He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for eating, may He supply and multiply your seed, and increase the fruits of your righteousness you being enriched in everything to all generosity, which works out thanksgiving to God through us". (v.10-11)

we must accept the concept that the sky is the limit

Do you know one of the reasons why our Orthodox churches have not progressed more than they have over the past 40 years? It's because we have placed mean limitations upon ourselves. We have never accepted the concept that "the sky is the limit", insofar as our ministry to others is concerned. People come to me and say, "Look at the church up the street who has just as many members as we have and whose budget is five times as great as ours, and 80 percent of whose budget is devoted to helping other people."

Do you know why we are not able to do that? It's because the earth is our limit and not the sky. The church walls are our limit, with electric bills and it's gas bills and it's repair bills, and salaries, and once in a while we raise a little money to help the poor at Thanksgiving and Christmas. These are our limits, not the sky, therefore God only provides us what we need because we don't need anymore. What do we need it for, to put it in the bank to draw interest? We are a Church, not a bank.

god provides what we need

So if you ever stopped and wondered why or how, stop wondering! How is it that some churches can get away with saying to their people, "10 percent is your obligation, and anything you give over that is a contribution"? How do they get away with that while we have to fight to raise our dues by a few dollars? They can get away with it because "the sky is their limit", not the earth. They can get away with it because it is their ambition to convert the whole world to their concept of Christianity. They may never do it but they are going to try because the sky is their limit.

But the Orthodox Church is concerned with the transformation and redemption of the world as well, and if we have not the sky as our limit it's only because we are not Orthodox in the truest sense of the word. If we are satisfied to just lope along from year to year, imposing upon good hearted, volunteering people to maintain the "status quo" of our parish, then we are indeed earth-bound creatures and there is little hope for us. Are we going to just sit on our duffs and maintain the status quo? Well, you may compel me to accept that, but I will do so most unhappily and I will do it grudgingly, because I know that God loves a cheerful giver, not a fleet-footed evader.

