



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF AUGUST 19, 2007

SUNDAY, AUGUST 19TH

12TH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

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

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25TH

6:00p.m. Vespers

SUNDAY, AUGUST 26TH

13TH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

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



On Not Judging Others

Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish attack. But the very essence of the person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement.

St. John of Kronstadt



Please Remember in Prayer

Jane Koshutko, Rich (Michael) Evanusa and Kathy Parrish, who are recovering from surgeries. If you have a prayer request, please let Fr. John know and he will post it in the bulletin.



Bible Study – Monday, August 27th

The next Bible Study will be on Monday, August 27th, at 7:00pm, at the church. The topic will be the Nativity of the Theotokos. All are invited to attend! And as always bring a Bible and a friend!

The Church New Year – September 1st

Every time we enter upon another year whether it be civil or ecclesiastical we have the opportunity to reflect upon the past and make changes for a better future. Let us ask ourselves: What practical changes can I make which will allow the Lord to act more in my life? Can I do more in my spiritual life – prayer, study, almsgiving, stewardship? Can we do more as a community – outreach, charity, evangelism? How can I personally and we collectively play a part in making this coming year better than the previous year?



Prayers for Teachers and Students – September 2nd

will be offered for the new academic year at the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, September 2nd. Teachers and students are asked to come forward near the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy for the blessing.

The Parish Council

will meet on Sunday, September 2nd, following the coffee hour.

Have a Question About Orthodoxy or Parish Life?

Get an answer by speaking with your priest. You may reach Fr. John at any time by phone or email. Or if you would like to speak with him in person, this can be done at any time by appointment or by talking to him at the church. Fr. John may be reached at: 302-988-1138 (home), 908-872-6589 (cell), or frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org.

Going to the Hospital?

Please let your priest know, so that he can add you to the prayer list, or, if you like, pay you a visit. The Church teaches, and medical research confirms, that a healthy spiritual life can be of much benefit when facing physical ailment, disease, or during the recovery process. If you would like, a short prayer and blessing can be offered following any service, just ask Fr. John.



Website Update

Photos from our Patronal Feast our on our website. Check it out!

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, August 26th

Hours: Jen Alexion
Epistle: Jen Alexion

Sunday, September 2nd

Hours: Matushka Emily
Epistle: Matushka Emily



MAKING ROOM FOR GOD

Fr. Andrew J. Barakos

There is a story of a high school senior who upon graduating his father takes him to a car dealership to select a gift. They found a car and the father said that he would take care of the rest. Graduation came and the young man's father said, 'Congratulations for finishing with honors, I want you to have this.' And he handed him a Bible. His son was furious! 'How dare you go back on your word and not give me the car!' The boy said, as he threw the Bible down and left. The boy went away to college and never had anything to do with his father for the rest of his life.



Many years later, news came to the young man that his father had died. He went back to his father's house in order to take care of the estate. In the library he ran across the bible that his father had given him. He went over and picked it up and opened it. There to his amazement was a check for the exact amount of the car along with a note. It read, "Dear Son, as important as a car might be to you, I didn't want you to forget the most important thing in life. The day you care enough to open this Bible then you will know."

God does the same thing with us. Every time we think that we know what is most important, He takes it away and reminds us of higher things. September first marks the beginning of the Church year in the Orthodox Church. The message rings loud and clear what is most important as the Church brings before us the Feast of the Cross of September 14th. The Cross is our companion and foundation as Christians. It instructs us that if are to followers of Christ we must 'deny ourselves, take up our Cross and follow Him'. Taking up one's Cross means that of our free choice we live lives which exhibit a denial of this world as an end in itself - we live for God's Kingdom!

Maybe we need to rethink what is most important on Saturday evenings. Instead of dinner and a movie, why not attend Great Vespers at 6:00 P.M.? One might discover that forty-five minutes spent in Church is far more satisfying than spending a lot of money for a movie that one forgets moments later. By the way, I wonder what it means when we spend ten dollars to see a bad movie and only one dollar when the tray is passed at Church?

Maybe we need to rethink how we spend our week. One might discover that one hour spent at the studies in Orthodox Class is far more satisfying than the one hour television program that evening. Interacting with fellow Christians, asking long kept questions and sharing from our life experiences is something which rarely takes place today.

Maybe we need to rethink how we spend our mornings. One might discover that a half hour spent in prayer and reading the Bible is far more satisfying than a morning walk or a stroll at the Mall. By communing with God through prayer and the reading of Holy Scriptures, we discover our true nature as being spiritual and that if it is not watered it will wilt and vanish away.



Whatever we may think God has taken away from us it presents an opportunity for us to discover a hidden treasure. God knows what we truly need and provides for us if only we are able to rethink a few things.

Fr. Andrew J. Barakos is the pastor of Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, Scottsdale, Arizona, and a member of the Board of Trustees for Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.



ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA – AN ONLINE DIRECTORY

Going on vacation this summer?

Be sure to check out the Orthodoxy in America website: orthodoxyinamerica.org. This site offers a complete listing of parishes, monasteries, and seminaries of all the canonical Orthodox jurisdictions in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.



The website uses mapping software to show you where the churches are actually located, and is also integrated with Google to provide you with detailed maps, driving directions, and satellite imagery. Finding an Orthodox church has never been simpler, just point and click, or enter the city, state or zip code. **Remember, everyone needs a vacation sometime, but no one can afford a vacation from God!**

IT HAPPENED AT THE EVENING PRAYERS

By an Orthodox Christian

A very sweet thing happened this evening. I was putting David and Todd to bed and we were saying our prayers. After we finished "The Lord's Prayer," Todd said to me, "Mommy, what does Mr. Hallowed do?" It took me a few seconds to realize what he was talking about: "Hallowed be Thy name." I told him that "Hallowed" was not really someone's name, but it meant that God's Name is very special and each time we say His Name, we need to remember all of the blessings that He gives us. It's remarkable to view life through the eyes and innocence of a child.



HUMILITY – A KEY TO BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

From the writings of Bishop Ignatius



One elder passed seventy weeks in fasting, eating food only twice a week, as he begged the Lord to reveal to him the meaning of a passage in Holy Scripture. But God would not reveal it to him.

Seeing this, the elder said to himself, "I have labored long and hard, and I have accomplished nothing. I will go to my brother and ask him."

When he had left his cell and locked the door behind him, an angel from the Lord appeared and said to him: "Seventy weeks of fasting did not bring you nearer to God. Now, however, when you have humbled yourself and resolved to go to your brother with your question, I have been sent to you to explain the meaning of this passage." And fulfilling this, the angel departed.

ON THE JESUS PRAYER

St. Theophan the Recluse

The practice of the Jesus Prayer is simple. Stand before the Lord with the attention in the heart and call to Him, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me!" The essential part of this is not in the words, but in faith, contrition, and self-surrender to the Lord. With these feelings, one can stand before the Lord even without any words, and it will still be prayer.



THE SOCIAL VIRTUES TO BE PRACTICED

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich (+1956)

Almsgiving: "When you give alms, do not sound a trumpet as do the hypocrites, that they might receive praise from men. Let not your right hand know what your left hand is doing. And your Father who sees in heaven shall reward you openly."

Giving without hesitation: "Give to him that asks, and do not turn away the one who desires to borrow from you." (Matthew 5:42) Give all in the name of Christ and for the brotherhood's sake.

Loving your enemies: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). There is no other way to cooperate with Christ, or to establish peace and brotherhood.

Forgiving your brother: "If your brother trespass against you, rebuke him, and if he repents, then forgive him. And if he trespasses against you seven times a day, and seven times a day turns to you and says, 'I repent', then you shall forgive him (Luke 17:3-4). Try to experience the joy of forgiving.

Humbleness: Christ was born in a stable. Why should we then strive after the highest honors and the first places? "Go down and sit in the lowest seat." "For whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and he that humbles himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:10-11).

Show pity to sinners: That is the way to help and reform them. Ridiculing and condemning them is of no avail. Christ considered them sick. He visited them (Zacchaeus), ate with them (Matthew), spoke kindly to them (women sinners), and thereby restored their spiritual health and human dignity.

Reconciliation: Before going to church, and also before being drawn before a court of law, a Christian should try to reconcile himself with his adversary (Matthew 5:23-25). However, "If your brother shall trespass against you," take action gradually, as was clearly prescribed by the Lord (Matthew 18:15-17).

Hopefulness, or Christian optimism: In all afflictions, calamities, persecutions, and even tortures and death, a Christian is hopeful. For he remembers Christ's words: "Great is your reward in heaven." "Fear not them who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul." "I have overcome the world." "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth."

KEEPING CHRIST IN MIND BETWEEN SUNDAYS

Written by the Very Rev. Vladimir Berzonsky

"When you come out of church do not begin to be distracted toward vain and useless matters, lest the devil come and find you occupied with them. It is as when a crow finds a grain of wheat on the plain before it has been covered up with earth and picks it up and flies off. So the devil removes the memory of the words of the catechesis from your hearts" (St. Simeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses*, Ch. XXX, 1)

There are many ways to state the same problem: How does one retain the peace, joy, inspiration and faith accrued within the mind and soul? What can be done to hold onto those glorious gifts of grace from the time I drive from the church's parking lot until the next time I enter? Like the song of Elton John for Lady Diana's funeral, "Candle in the Wind," many of us hardly make it home without surrendering our spiritual selves to some passing motorist or the checkout clerk in the supermarket. We blow up when cut off on the road or when treated discourteously.

One must work at self control. In a culture that encourages us to "let it all hang out," whatever that implies, or to "be in touch with your inner self," the implication is that we should feel free to express our emotions and disregard the effect it has on others. We are a self-indulgent people and rarely excuse ourselves for bad behavior. This is in opposition to the person we must become if we dare call ourselves Christian. Read slowly the Sermon on the Mount chapters 5-7 in the St. Matthew gospel to find what it is our Lord expects from us.

We are capable of continuing the uplifting emotions that charged our spiritual batteries while in church. You may say that you are easily distracted and that may well be; however, it shows that you have to take control of your thought patterns. St. Maximus the Confessor wrote that we are like riders on horses. We are the rider. We have a mind, a memory, and a plan for where we wish to go. The horse is like the irrational passions that want to control us, set the route or have no route, and act in an arbitrary fashion. Who is in control?

A third element in connecting the spiritual high one feels when in church from one church service to another is to pray continually. Much has been written about this controversial and even frustrat-

ing demand from St. Paul [I Thessalonians 5:17]. Some even try to explain the order away, such as saying that work is prayer. But St. Paul meant it literally. It is possible and worthwhile to develop a constant consciousness of the Holy Trinity. When the Bible and church fathers ask that we have a fear of God, they mean that by the awareness of God's omnipresence we are cautious, even fearful, of acting or speaking in ways that offend His presence.

We all know that prayer takes several forms. We soon memorize certain psalms and those prayers we say mornings and evenings. And it's always proper to begin with them. We may go on to lift up personal prayers for our immediate needs: For the ill, the needy, those in some circumstance that calls for our concern, and we move on to contemplation, enjoying the feeling that overwhelms us after we pray or even without verbal prayers, when we imbibe the grace of the Holy Spirit like warm water flowing through our souls.

What happens when we lose those exquisite feelings of being in the Lord's presence? It happens when we say mean, vulgar, silly words to others or even to ourselves. Or when we stew in some real or imagined feeling of anger, dejection, rejection or grief. That is when it takes both courage and grace to be humble enough to realize that we are alienated from the loving Lord, to beg forgiveness, and to reconnect with the energy of the Holy Spirit "present everywhere and filling all things" and to fill us again with Himself.



ON THE BENEFITS OF ATTENDING THE LITURGY

St. Maximos the Confessor

It is necessary for every Christian to spend time in the holy church of God, and never to miss the celebration of the Divine Liturgy – for here, the holy angels have custody – they register the people going in each time and offer their angelic intercessions on their behalf. Each person who is found present at the Divine Liturgy, the grace of the Holy Spirit transforms, remolds, and truly remodels into a more divine image, conforming to Himself.

