



## CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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### BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 10, 2008

#### Please Remember in Prayer

Carole Boris and Jane Koshutko who are undergoing treatment. If you have a prayer request, please let Fr. John know.

#### Annual Meeting

The 2008 Annual Meeting of the Parish will be held today, Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, following the Coffee Hour. All full-time and part-time members, as well as visitors and contributors to the Mission are encouraged to attend.



#### Fast-free Week

During the week of the Publican and Pharisee, February 17-23, we do not fast, even on Wednesday and Friday.

#### Sitting and Standing In Church

It sometimes is asked, "When can I sit in church?" Generally speaking it is good to stand as much as one is able. However, there are times in which it is permitted to sit too, for instance during the sermon or announcements, or during the service when the Royal Doors are closed, or at any other time necessary. The important thing is to have a spirit of prayer whether we be standing or sitting.

#### The Baptism of Baby Alexander Parsells

has been scheduled for Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, at 11:00am. All are invited to attend. A light lunch will be served following the baptism.

#### Special Coffee Hour

Please join us for a special coffee hour, Sunday, March 2, 2008 to welcome baby Alexander Parsells. There will be a light lunch served for all. If you have any questions or wish to bring an appetizer or dessert, please see Jen Alexion or Alice Peters.

#### Orthodox 101 – A Class On Our Faith

will resume, Thursday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm. This class will cover: Slavic Christianity, Fall of Byzantium, Turkish Yoke, Missions to North America, Orthodoxy and the West, Jurisdictions in America, Future of Orthodoxy.



### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>

#### ZACCHAEUS SUNDAY

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

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>

6:00p.m. Vespers

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>

#### PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE SUNDAY

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

#### Looking Ahead:

- ❖ March 2<sup>nd</sup> – Meatfare Sunday
- ❖ March 9<sup>th</sup> – Cheesefare Sunday
- ❖ March 10<sup>th</sup> – Great Lent Begins
- ❖ March 25<sup>th</sup> – Annunciation
- ❖ April 20<sup>th</sup> – Palm Sunday
- ❖ April 25<sup>th</sup> – Holy Friday
- ❖ April 27<sup>th</sup> – Pascha

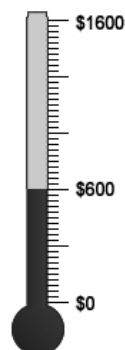
#### READER SCHEDULE

##### Sunday, Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>

Hours: Kathy Parrish  
Epistle: Kathy Parrish

##### Sunday, Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>

Hours: Sandy St. Germain  
Epistle: Sandy St. Germain



#### Donation Update: Liturgical Covers

With \$600 already donated, we are more than one third of our way to our goal of \$1600 for new liturgical covers for our Altar Table, Table of Oblation, five icon stands, three additional tables, and Gospel stand. Our church needs gold, white, red, purple, green, and blue sets. If you would like to donate a set, please see Fr. John.

Approximate cost:

\$250 per set / \$1600 total with shipping.

## BLESSED DISSATISFACTION

By V. Rev. Steven Kostoff

"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." (Ps. 42:2)

"Can't get no satisfaction" -- The Rolling Stones

The driving guitar riff and raspy-voiced lyrics of this Rolling Stones classic gives a kind of pop-articulation to the disaffection of the lonely and alienated urbanite who, try as he might, just cannot succeed at satisfying the material and romantic/sexual goals droned into his mind on the radio and TV. Nevertheless, this song - regardless of its actual intentions - managed to say something enduring about the "human condition." (Personally, I am inclined to believe that the members of the Rolling Stones never did derive a great amount of "satisfaction" from their enormous fame and fortune. Money and media exposure may, after all, just not be the solution.) Be that as it may, a rather odd connection came to me between this song and a verse from "The Akathist of Thanksgiving" that we chanted in our parish during the ecclesial observance of Thanksgiving Day. In Ikos Six of the akathist, one of the verses in the refrain reads as follows:

Glory to Thee, Who has inspired in us dissatisfaction with earthly things.

Both the Stones song and the Orthodox hymn speak of "no satisfaction" or "dissatisfaction." However, by "earthly things," Fr Gregory Petrov, the author of this remarkable hymn, does not mean the natural world in which God has placed us. The refrain of Ikos Three makes that abundantly clear:

Glory to Thee, Who hast brought out of the earth's darkness diversity of color, taste and fragrance,  
Glory to Thee, for the warmth and caress of nature,  
Glory to Thee, for surrounding us with thousands of Thy creatures,  
Glory to Thee, for the depth of Thy wisdom reflected in the whole world ...

To the purified eyes of faith, the world around us can be a "festival of life ... foreshadowing eternal life" (Ikos Two). The "earthly" can lead us to the "heavenly." "Earthly things" in the context of the Akathist Hymn and the Orthodox worldview expressed in it, would certainly refer to the very things the Rolling Stones song laments as being absent: material and sexual satisfaction seen as ends in themselves. But whereas the song expresses both frustration and resentment as part of the psychic pain caused by such deprivation, the Akathist Hymn glorifies God for such a blessing! In



the light of the insight of the Akathist Hymn, we can thus speak of a "blessed dissatisfaction." The Apostle Paul spoke of a closely-related "godly grief." (The Rolling Stones and the Orthodox Church nevertheless part company at this point...)

This may prove to be quite a challenge to our way of approaching "dissatisfaction." Our usual instinct is to flee from dissatisfaction as from the plague. Such a condition implies unhappiness, together with a sense of deprivation and failure, the feeling that we are losing in the harsh game of life. Why should we tolerate the condition of dissatisfaction when limitless means of achieving "satisfaction" are at our disposal? To escape from a gnawing sense of dissatisfaction, don't people resort to alcohol, drugs and sex as desperate forms of relief? Or unrestrained and massive consumer spending? And we should not exclude "religion" as one of those means of escape. If those means fail, therapy and medication offer more aggressive ways to relieve us of this unendurable feeling.

Sadly, many people learn the hard way that every ill-conceived attempt to eliminate dissatisfaction through "earthly things" leads only to a further and deeper level of this intolerable affliction. Sadder still, there are many who would "forfeit their soul/life" just to avoid the bitter taste of dissatisfaction! Especially when "blessed dissatisfaction" can lead us elsewhere. In a passage from his Diary of a Russian Priest, Fr Alexander Elchaninov describes very eloquently the point of transition from dissatisfaction to satisfaction.

What is this continual sense of dissatisfaction, of anxiety, which we normally feel within us, save the stifled voice of conscience speaking to us inwardly on the subconscious level, and often contradicting our own will and declaring the untruth that our life is? As long as we live in conflict with the law of light which has been granted us, this voice will not be silent, for it is the voice of God

Himself in our soul. On the other hand, that rare feeling of keen satisfaction, of plenitude and joy, is the happiness caused by the union of the divine principle in our soul with the universal harmony and the divine essence of the world. (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY (2001), p. 26.)

If the living God exists, as we believe He does, then how could we not feel dissatisfaction at His absence from our lives? What could possibly fill the enormous space in the depth of our hearts that yearns for God "as a hart longs for flowing streams." (Ps. 42:1) It is as if when people hear the voice of God calling them - in their heart, their conscience, through another person, or through a personal tragedy - they turn up the volume so as to drown out that call. If we were made for God, then each person has an "instinct for the transcendent" (I recall this expression from Fr Alexander Schmemmann) that can only be suppressed at an incalculable cost to our very humanity. In His infinite mercy, the Lord blesses us with a feeling of

dissatisfaction so that we do not foolishly lose our souls in the infinitesimal pseudo-satisfactions that come our way. Therefore, we thank God for the gift of "blessed dissatisfaction!"

When we realize that we "can't get no satisfaction," then we have approached the threshold of making a meaningful decision about the direction of our life. The way "down" can lead to the kind of benign despair that characterizes the lives of many today. The way "up," on the other hand, leads to the One Who is "enthroned above the heavens," the only Source of true satisfaction. The Rolling Stones uncovered the truth of an enduring condition that we all must face and deal with. I am not so sure about the solution they would ultimately offer ... but in their initial intuition they proved to be very "Orthodox!"

*V. Rev. Steven Kostoff is the Pastor of Christ the Savior/Holy Spirit Orthodox Church, Norwood, Ohio.*

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## IMITATE THE SAINT WHOSE NAME YOU BEAR

*From Orthodox Life # 4, 1978*

At holy Baptism each person is given a Christian name -- the name of an angel or of some holy person. This bestowal of a Christian name at Baptism has a profound meaning and a great significance. A Christian name serves not only to distinguish one person from another, but also establishes an important bond with the saint of that name and places a definite obligation upon him. From the moment a baptized person is given his Christian name, the saint whose name he has been given becomes his personal guide and mentor on the path to Heaven. The Christian is thus entrusted to this saint for instruction, for preparation for the life to come. In like manner, as a father entrusts his children to a good and experienced teacher, so does our Heavenly Father deliver the Christian to the care and guidance of his patron saint. In one's patron saint, the Christian has his dearest and best teacher, comforter, guardian, and intercessor at the throne of God. The spiritual joy a Christian experiences is at the same time the joy of his heavenly protector; his sorrow is also the saint's sorrow. With whom can we share our joy, to whom can we



relate our sorrow, from whom can we ask help, if not from the saint who lives our life with us, who rejoices in our joy, who is saddened by our grief? Indeed, it is not in vain that the pious Christian has a Molieben (Prayer Service) served on his "Name Day," i.e. the day on which the Church commemorates his heavenly patron. We earnestly entreat our saint that, forgiving our offenses and all the sins we committed throughout the year, he will not forsake us in his aid and intercession before God throughout the coming year. Our patron saint rejoices with us in this and prays to God with us, and offers up his own mighty prayers to reconcile us with our Heavenly Master.

The bearing of a Christian name imposes a great and sacred obligation upon us: by our own life we must imitate the saint whose name it is our good fortune to bear; if not, we will show ourselves to be unworthy of the mercies of our heavenly protectors. We have been created for eternal life in heaven, and the saints are given to us as guides along the path.

It is a well-known truth that example is the best teacher. Words of instruction often remain merely

words if they are not supported by example. In the holy saints we have wonderful examples of holy and righteous life. We must therefore imitate them in our own lives. In this regard, the saints themselves present us with a lofty and edifying example, for they strove with zeal to make manifest in their own lives and deeds those good traits of Christian conduct that were to be found in the lives of their patron saints. Here is but one example of this. On June 6, we celebrate the memory of St Hilarion the New. (1) While yet a child living at his parents' home, he often read the Life of his patron saint, the Venerable Hilarion the Great, (2) and strove to imitate him according to the measure of a child's capacity. Thus the desire was born in him to imitate his heavenly protector, St Hilarion, in abandoning the world and its vanities. This desire grew increasingly stronger with the passage of the years, and lo, when he reached the age of twelve we already find him at the holy monastery of Dalmatus, clothed in monastic garb. For ten years he remained in unwavering obedience, laboring diligently in the monastery's garden. Yet while carrying out his duties without grumbling, Hilarion did not lose sight of the other obligations of a monk, and often read the Life of St Hilarion the Great, striving to imitate him in fasting, prayer and in all manner of ascetic labors. For this he received the title St Hilarion the New (or the younger). The abbot of the monastery recommended him for ordination to the holy priesthood, but he declined this high rank out of humility. After the abbot's repose, the brethren decided to elect Hilarion to fill his place, but this, too, he declined, acquiescing only at the insistence of the Patriarch of Constantinople. (3) During the iconoclast controversy, St Hilarion came forward in defense of holy Orthodoxy and the veneration of icons; for this he was given over to many tortures and was finally sent off to imprisonment on one of the islands in the Sea of Marmara. During the regency of Empress Theodora, (4) a defender of the veneration of icons, St Hilarion was returned from his prison to the monastery of Dalmatus, where he spent the remaining days of his life.

St Hilarion, a brief account of whose life has been given above, serves as an edifying example

of the imitation of the life of the saint whose name one bears. He often read the Life of his patron saint and strove to follow his example in fasting and prayer. We also should acquaint ourselves with the life of our patron saints and imitate them in our lives. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation" (Heb. 13:7). This injunction is given to us by the Apostle to the Gentiles. Is it possible, then, that we should abandon the world, enclose ourselves in a narrow, monastic cell, become



"fools for Christ's sake" (I Cor. 4:10), to imitate the saints? No, this is not required of us. Have a firm faith in God, love Him with all your heart, live according to the canons of the holy Church, unite yourselves to her, love your neighbors -- selflessly, forsake your vices and passions, pray often to God, visit the church, avail yourself frequently of the opportunity to confess your sins, partake of Holy Communion with reverence, with full knowledge of your unworthiness of receiving the dread Mysteries of Christ -- do all this and you will be a worthy imitator of the life of your saint and of all the saints, for they were pleasing to God in their works and were vouchsafed the Kingdom of Heaven.

St Athanasius the Great, Patriarch of Alexandria, relates that St Anthony the Great, gathering the knowledge of the ascetics of his time, studied in each of them their outstanding traits: in one he observed hospitality, in another perseverance in prayer, in another the absence of anger, in yet another love for his fellow man; with some he was amazed at their patience, with others at their fasting. Thus did he combine into one what he had borrowed from others, and strove to exemplify all the outstanding characteristics of them all. So also do we have an obligation to imitate the lives of the saints whose names we bear. To imitate them we must thoroughly know and study their lives. He who knows the life of the saint whose name he bears and strives to imitate him in his own life, bears his name worthily. He is worthy of God's mercy, for the saints are God's friends, as the Psalmist bears witness, saying: "Wondrous is God in His saints, the God of Israel" (Ps. 67:36).