



Entrance of the Virgin

CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF NOVEMBER 22, 2009

Please Remember in Prayer

Bill Parrish (in Mercy Hospital in Baltimore), Carole Boris (newly-departed), Archpriest Michael, Monk Christian, Nadia, Kathy Parrish, Marie, Thomas, Judith Kocinski, Jane Koshutko, Robert Evanusa, Nicholas & Linda, Nicholas, Anna, Steven, Yvonne, Katherine, Michael, Gregory, Todd & Olga Leisure, Nina Gordon, Constantina & Christos, Mirela & Chris, Jaroslav, Troy Paul Duker, Frank & Mary Miranda, Kathy T. Requests? Let Fr. John know.

The Parish Council

will meet today, November 22nd, following the coffee hour. All members of the parish are invited to stay for the meeting, however, voting privileges are reserved for those who have been blessed to serve on the Council.

Orthodox Movie Night – November 23rd

This Monday we will be showing a 55 minute film on "Patmos: Echoes of the Apocalypse". All are invited to view this video about the island where St. John the Theologian was exiled and where he wrote the Book of Revelation!



Many Thanks!



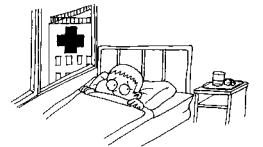
To the Parrish Family and the Dagsboro Café for the fundraiser they offered this past week for the Christ the Savior Building Fund! May the Lord bless them as well as all those who went out to support this fundraising / fellowship building endeavor!

Questions Regarding Keeping the Nativity Fast?

If you have any questions about how best to keep the Nativity Fast, please see page 4 of the bulletin and consider talking to your priest.

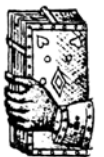
A Reminder About Hospitalization

Federal Privacy Laws (HIPAA) do not allow clergy access to a hospital's census. This means that the only way your priest will know that you are in the hospital is if you tell him, either yourself or through a family member or friend. Even if you don't necessarily want a visit from your priest or anyone else to know that you are in the hospital, it is still a good idea to let your priest know so that prayers can be offered on your behalf.



Spiritual Reading

is an important way for Christians to grow in their relationship with God. This is because the more we come to understand our Faith the better we can live it. What spiritual book are you currently reading? Want a recommendation, just ask Fr. John.



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND

24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD

- 7:00p.m. Orthodox Movie Night

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH

- 5:00p.m. Orthodoxy 101
- 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH

25TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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

On Finding Truth in Jesus Christ

"The mystery of Truth is not in material things, not in ideas, not in symbols, but in Personhood, namely the Theanthropic Person of the Lord Christ, Who said: 'I am the Truth' (John 14:6), Perfect Truth, never diminished, always one and the same in its complete fullness - yesterday, today, and forever (Heb.13:8)."

St. Justin Popovich

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Nov. 29th

Kathy Parrish

Sunday, Dec. 6th

Jodi McElwee



ADVENT

By VRev. Vladimir Berzonsky, From Word Magazine

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase;" (Isaiah 9:1)

"I understand the significance of the pre-Easter lent, but why do we keep a Lenten season for Christmas, since it's such a joyous occasion?" The woman who made the comment spoke sincerely and her reasoning was correct. What she misunderstood was the purpose of Lenten fasting and spiritual preparation.

To so many of our people, fasting and prayers are expressions of sorrow for a rupture in Divine-human relationships, such as was the murder of Jesus Christ.

Primarily, lent is a time for our concentrated preparing for the Kingdom of God's manifestation within us. By freeing ourselves from the things of this world we can better live and experience the Spirit of God dwelling in our souls. It is a time of pilgrimage—a spiritual journey to our true native land which the Lord has prepared for us.

Now it is advent, the time of His coming. Christ is on the way to my world, my city, my house and to me. How will He find it: what will He think of us; will He be pleased?

Ostensibly we are preparing for Christmas. External trappings, translucent, illuminated neon and plastic bubbles pronounce greetings to anybody, and receive about as much notice as the recently discarded cardboard announcements of political candidates. Reluctant consumers dutifully divest the glutted department stores of what everybody knows nobody needs or wants, because it's XMAS. Liquor store registers and corner Santas' hand bells jingle in cacophony. Does this please Him? Is all

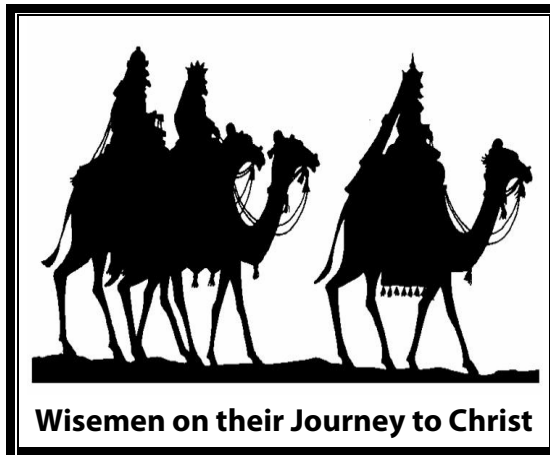
this a worthy greeting for Him? Nobody thinks so, and nobody planned it this way; yet it appears we're locked in a social mechanism we hadn't chosen to enter.

We ought to become serious about freeing ourselves of all the material objects that are idols for so many, promising a happiness they are incapable of fulfilling; if we know that advent is just a time for learning to do without, then capitalist Xmas is a travesty of Christ's coming. It is in fact the very opposite of self-denial and spiritual preparation for communion with God in Christ. We sense His displeasure. Underneath the tinsel peeks out a sad, selfish and troubled world.

Can it be He'll find even a few who await His coming with hope and longing? Are there those who, while knowing themselves responsible for the world as it is, yet trust in

His promise of another life and prepare themselves for it, while at the same time doing all in their capability to give content and a dimension of true values to this present world?

There were such in every age of the past, and God sought them out from their society: Abraham in Chaldea, Lot in Sodom, Moses in Midian, Elijah at the Cherith wadi and young Mary in Nazareth. While there are such remaining in the world, God's covenant with mankind is not abrogated. To fulfill advent, then, would be to make ourselves like them; a difficult task, but not impossible, for "With God, all things are possible."



Wisemen on their Journey to Christ

ON THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

By St. Justin Popovich

The Lives of the Saints shows numerous, but always safe paths of salvation, enlightenment, sanctification, transfiguration, Christianization, theosis. They show all the ways with which human nature overcomes sin, passion, death, and the demon. The Lives of the Saints witness to the truth that in the holy Church of Christ, man with the holy mysteries and the holy virtues is transfigured into a "god by grace," into a godman by grace.



GREEK CHURCH ACTS ON CRUCIFIX BAN

By Malcolm Brabant, BBC News, Athens

BBC NEWS

The Greek Orthodox Church is urging Christians across Europe to unite in an appeal against a ban on crucifixes in classrooms in Italy.

The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg ruled last week that the presence of crucifixes violated a child's right to freedom of religion. Greece's Orthodox Church fears the Italian case will set a precedent. It has called an emergency Holy Synod meeting for next week to devise an action plan. Although the Greek Orthodox Church has been at odds with Roman Catholicism for 1,000 years, the judicial threat to Christian symbols has acted as a unifying force. The European Court of Human Rights found that the compulsory display of crucifixes violated parents' rights to educate their children as they saw fit and restricted the right of children to believe or not to believe.



'Worthy symbols'

The head of the Greek Church, Archbishop Ieronymos, shares Catholic complaints that the court is ignoring the role of Christianity in forming Europe's identity. It is not only minorities that have rights but majorities as well, said the archbishop. One of his subordinates, Bishop Nicholas from central Greece, lamented that at this rate youngsters will not have any worthy symbols at all to inspire and protect them. Football and pop idols are very poor substitutes, he said.



The Greek Church has ostensibly intervened in this case in response to an appeal by a Greek mother whose son is studying in Italy. But without doubt it is concerned that its omnipotence in Greece is under threat. A human rights group called Helsinki Monitor is seeking to use the Italian case as a precedent. It has demanded that Greek courts remove icons of Jesus Christ from above the judge's bench and that the gospel no longer be used for swearing oaths in the witness box.

Helsinki Monitor is urging trade unions to challenge the presence of religious symbols in Greek schools. The socialist government here is also considering imposing new taxes on the Church's vast fortune, but at the same time is urging it to do more to help immigrants and poor Greeks.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX PATRIARCH FLIES FIGHTER JETS AND SKYDIVES

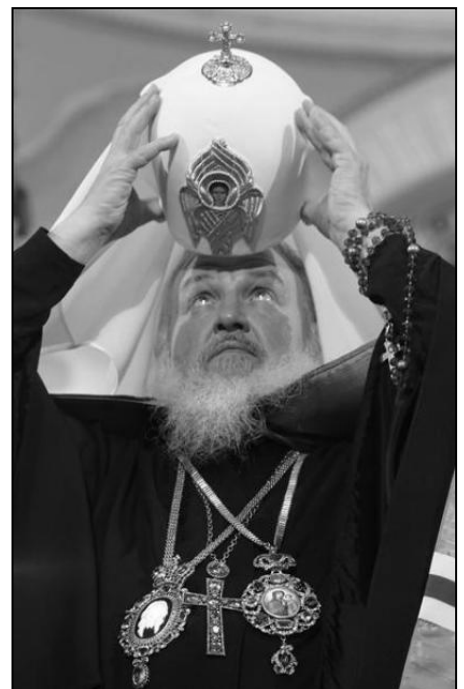
From FaithWorld / By Conor Humphries

The head of Russia's Orthodox Church has flown fighter jets and passenger airliners and has tried to convince colleagues of the joys of parachute jumps, according to a senior cleric in Moscow.

Patriarch Kirill, enthroned as leader of the world's 160 million Russian Orthodox believers in February, spends much of his time following rituals little changed since the Middle Ages. But he has other ways to get close to the heavens.

"He has taken the control stick of passenger planes, to which I am a witness, and of fighter jets," said Archbishop Hilarion Alfeyev, quoted by Interfax news agency.

"Once he even tried to convince me to make a parachute jump," said Alfeyev, a senior cleric who oversees the church's relations with other Christian denominations. "I said I was ready so as long as I knew the date in advance so I could leave my papers in order." He said the 62-year-old patriarch had not yet set a date.



ASK FATHER: 3 QUESTIONS / 3 ANSWERS

Q. Father, I've never fasted before, well at least not for a whole fasting season. And I'm afraid to start because the fasting guidelines look to be just too difficult for me. What should I do?

A. Your question is an excellent one, particularly because you see not just the need to fast but also the need to find a profitable level of abstinence – one that is not too difficult nor too easy.

As with anything else one has never done before, one should start slow and then make a gradual increase. This may mean abstaining just from meat for the period of the fast, and then next fast abstaining from meat and dairy products. But whatever level of abstinence you choose (and it is advisable to consult with your priest when doing so) should be carried out through the entire fasting period, not just on particular days of the week.

Q. How is fasting different from abstinence?

Fasting, strictly speaking, means a totally going without food and drink for a certain short period of time, usually until a particular time of day (say noon, 3pm, or sundown) or for the whole day (such as on Great and Holy Friday). This type of fast is kept when preparing for Holy Communion, as physical hunger helps to cultivate the spiritual expectation of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ.

While abstinence, on the other hand, means refraining from certain types of foods (such as meat, dairy, fish, wine or oil) and reducing our portions so that we leave the table before we are completely satisfied. This type of fast is kept over a long period of time, as during the four fasting seasons, and throughout the year on Wednesdays and Fridays. The aim of abstinence is to slowly and deliberately starve the passions so that man's spirit can break free and return to God. For this type of fasting to be effective, it must be undertaken with patience and unbroken continuity. As Fr. Alexander Schmemmann explains, "The time factor is essential for it takes time to uproot and to heal the common and universal disease which men have come to consider as their 'normal' state", that is it takes time for man to realize that he is not meant to live on bread alone but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God.

Q. Fasting is great in theory but it seems practically impossible. What kinds of food can I prepare without meat or dairy products?

In today's consumer market there are many ways to keep the fast without having to resort to a bread and water diet. The following two resources should help: the cookbook, "When You Fast... Recipes for Lenten Seasons" by Catherine Mandell, and vegan-food.net, a website with hundreds of Lenten recipes.

ON FASTING

Fr. Thomas Hopko

Orthodox Christians believe that their spiritual lives start with their stomachs. They believe that when peoples' eating is right their spirits can be more open to God and more attentive to all that is good, true, and beautiful in life. When, on the contrary, peoples' eating is wrong, their minds are disordered; their emotions are rebellious; and their flesh rules their being and behavior in harmful ways.

Right eating means to eat the right foods in the right amounts at the right times in the right ways for the right reasons. People who eat properly prepare and partake of their meals with discipline and dignity, free from emotional drives and carnal desires. They do this to serve God, their fellow creatures, and their own well-being more effectively, fruitfully, and joyfully.

The Church provides guidelines for healthy eating and sane fasting. The Lord Jesus Christ is the first and final Teacher on the subject, as He is on all others.

Christ and His apostles feasted and fasted. They affirmed that God gives all foods to be enjoyed with thanksgiving (Act 10:10-15; Rom 14:6). They also warned that eating can become idolatrous. St. Paul, for example, speaks of "persons (who) do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own belly" (Rom 16:18). "Their end," he says, "is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things" (Phil 3:19).

The Scriptures and the Saints teach that in eating and fasting, moderation is the rule for it leads to freedom from the carnal passions: lust, greed, anger, sadness, sloth, and despondency. While excesses of any kind are harmful and destructive, leading to either to gluttony and drunkenness, or to pride, vainglory, ungodly zeal, condemnation of others, and spiritual delusion.

