



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2014

A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors! It's good to have you!

Parish Council Meeting – September 21st

Today we will have our 3rd quarterly meeting. Regular reports will be offered. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

“Polar Bear Club” Sunday – September 21st

Today will be the final day for swimming during the coffee hour. All are welcome to take one last dip in the “frigid” waters. Parents please watch your children even though a lifeguard is on duty.



Food for the Hungry

A food basket has been placed in the fellowship hall. This basket is for non-perishable items which will be distributed to those in need.

Parishioners That Are Home Bound

If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. John would be more than pleased to visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. Please schedule a visit with Fr. John.

Congratulations!

to Vladimir and Olga Bozic on the birth of their baby boy, born Tuesday, Sept. 9th, weighing in at 7 lbs, 1 ozs! May the Lord continue to bless their young family!



Haven't Seen Someone in a While?

Give them a call. See how they are doing. Let them know that you not only miss them but also care enough to see if everything is okay. A kind word can go a long way.

Have a Question?

Are you wondering about Orthodox Christianity or Christ the Savior Mission? Please feel free to ask Fr. John any questions in person, via phone (302-537-6055) or email (frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org).



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST

15th Sunday of Pentecost

Sunday After the Cross

8:40a.m. Hours

9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour/Open Pool
Parish Council Meeting

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH

6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH

16th Sunday of Pentecost

8:40a.m. Hours

9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

“Seek God daily. But seek Him in your heart, not outside it. And when you find Him, stand with fear and trembling, like the Cherubim and the Seraphim, for your heart has become a throne of God. But in order to find God, become humble as dust before the Lord, for the Lord abhors the proud, whereas He visits those that are humble in heart...”

St. Nectarios of Aegina (+1920)

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Sept. 28th

Alexis Oleynik

Sunday, Oct. 5th

Gabriela Jones



CASH FLOWS THROUGH 8/31/14					CASH FLOWS IN SEPTEMBER 2014					FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	ASSETS & LIABILITIES – 9/21		
Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Checking	Overdue	Mortgage
49,647	45,844	8,231	9,850	+2,184	4,400	4,473	0	2,294	-2,367	7,836	0	353,408

COUNSELS FOR LIFE

From the teachings of the Elder Epiphanius of Athens (+1989)

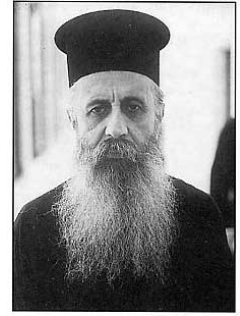
Psychiatric Illness, Demonic Influence, and Holiness

Many Christians maintain that psychiatric illnesses are due to demonic influence and, with this viewpoint, they reject the use of psychiatric medicines. What do you have to say about this position?

A certain percentage and, furthermore, a small percentage of psychiatric patients are really possessed. The majority, however, of the psychiatric patients are not possessed nor are the manifestations of their psychiatric illnesses due to demonic influence. And how can we tell that there is a possession, when it is such? The Church diagnoses possession from the position of the sufferer as regards the sacred Sacraments: Divine Communion, Confession, etc. Or as regards the Gospel, the precious Cross, the sacred relics or the holy icons and, in general, the sacred things. Father ----- tells me that at St. Gerasimus of Kephalaria they used to place the Holy Scriptures or some icon on the back of a possessed person lying face down – that is, without him seeing – in order to exclude the possibility of suggestion – and then the possessed person would tremble, a thing which would not occur when they would place other types of books or objects on him.

Do we have an example of psychosis among the saints?

Certainly. I will off-hand mention to you St. Olympiada, the deaconess. After the exile of St. John Chrysostom, her spiritual father, she suffered depression and this saint consoled her with his letters reminding her of the divine reward for those who are persecuted in the name of the Lord.



Abba John used to say that the saints are like a group of trees, each bearing different fruit, but all watered from the same source. The practices of one saint differ from those of another, but it is the same Spirit that works in all of them.

The Desert Fathers

SAINT
ISAAC



Blessed is the one who knows his own weakness, because awareness of this becomes for him the foundation and beginning of all that is good and beautiful. Love sinners but hate their works; and do not despise them for their faults, lest you also be tempted.

St. Isaac the Syrian

THE
SYRIAN



The demons have no means of taking possession of a man's spirit or body, no power to forcibly enter his soul, unless they first deprive him of all his holy thoughts, and make him empty and devoid of spiritual contemplation and reflection.

St. John Cassian

REVERENCE FOR LIFE IS GIVEN TO US

Time spent on meaningful pursuits such as developing our talents and increasing our knowledge are worthy goals. However, the noblest use of time that will give meaning to our lives is practicing reverence for life by personal involvement with those who need our help desperately. True greatness lies in qualities of the heart, in charity and in love. Have you noticed that our happiest times are those in which we forget ourselves, usually in being kind to someone else?

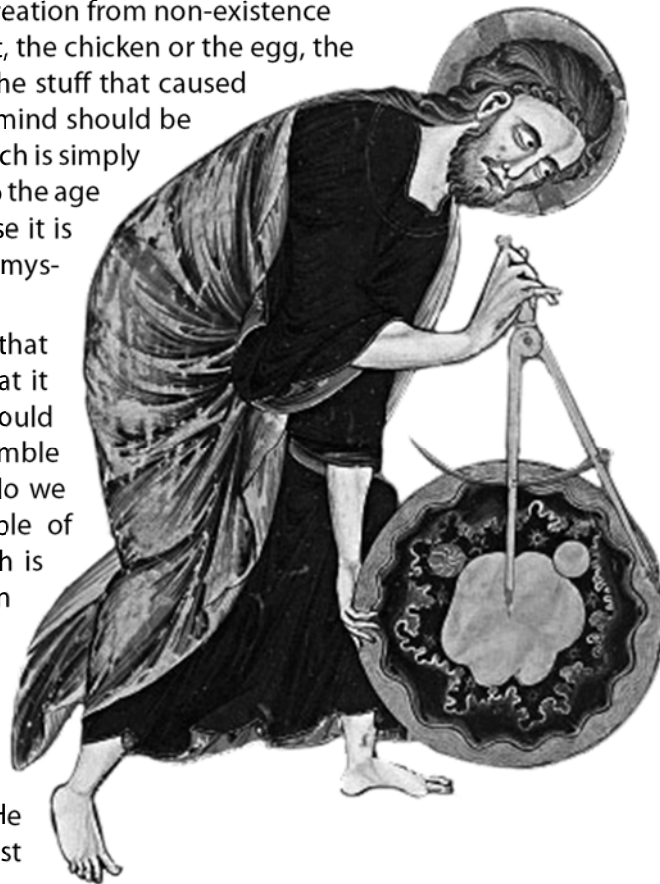


ASK FATHER: 3 QUESTIONS / 3 ANSWERS

Question: Are Orthodox Christians “young earth creationists”?

Answer: The question as to the age of the creation is inextricably tied to the bringing forth of creation from non-being into being – the very beginning when time and space were first created. Two main doctrines come to mind: 1) The physical world is created and has limits. 2) Only God is uncreated and limitless. If we are to answer this question truthfully, we have to acknowledge our limitations. The first being that it is impossible for the human mind to even fathom creation from non-existence into being. We run in circles around what came first, the chicken or the egg, the big bang or the stuff that caused the big bang, or the stuff that caused the stuff, etc.. This innate limitation of the human mind should be enough for us to realize the limitation of science which is simply a human intellectual discipline. So the question as to the age of creation, cannot be answered by science because it is impossible for the human mind to understand the mystery of going from non-existence into being.

That said, we are free to think/believe/hypothesize that the creation happened over trillions of years or that it happened in 7 literal days. But in my opinion, we should not argue for one or the other. The Church is humble enough and honest enough to say that not only do we not know, but most importantly we are incapable of knowing. People debate the question as to which is more likely, an old earth or a young earth. You can read about this if you are interested in human debate about questions which are beyond human comprehension (ie. creation ex nihilo). I would say this, though, that for God, with whom one day is like a 1000 years and 1000 years, one day, it is equally possible that the earth is old or young. He could have fashioned it loooooooong ago or just long ago.



We must remember that the observable natural laws which govern the continuance of creation do not apply to the unobservable act or process of creation from non-being into being. The natural laws observed by science deal with what happened after the creation was set in motion, not the act or process of creation itself. Likewise, it logically follows that since creation and continuance are by definition different, the methods/processes/laws of each must be different as well. This means, that God wouldn't have to wait trillions of years to make a world with layers of strata in line with the natural laws that He would later establish for the world's continuance. He could do it in one second, if He wanted to. By way of example, God could call a pizza from non-being into being, without first kneading the dough, making the sauce, heating the oven, etc., but to us that pizza would look like it had passed through all the steps in the kitchen because otherwise it wouldn't be a pizza. Sadly, I think that some, perhaps forgetting that they are not God, try to make microwave pizzas in this way. :)

Interestingly, Genesis speaks of a staged creation (7 days/stages), not a single instant, yet the stages are described as “days” not “months” or “years” indicating an expedited fashion. Of course, the whole Genesis account is shrouded in mystery because of our human limitations. For those who are interested, there are a million hypotheticals regarding method and how long it actually took but I think there are better uses of our time, like contemplating how cool it is that no matter what our opinion, we are all united in our inability to even know. Thanks be to God for humbling us all! And so, in summary, if you want an Orthodox response to the age of creation: Only God knows because only God can know – and thank God for that!

Question: But why would God create the world to look like it was millions/billions/trillions of years old when in fact it isn't? Why would He trick us?

Answer: I don't think that those who consider the possibility that the Lord could create the universe in short amount of time would list trickery among the Lord's motives. Those who theorize a young earth, simply acknowledge that God could call things from non-existence into being at any stage and that no matter what stage, it makes logical sense that what He called from non-being into being would correspond to the natural laws and properties which He would later establish for the world's continuance.

This is actually illustrated when the Lord Jesus multiplied the loaves in the Gospels. He didn't need to wait for the yeast to rise and the oven timer to go off, He simply created more bread, and the bread looked and tasted just like any bread that had been made through natural processes. It wasn't sleight of hand or a magic trick, it was a display of God's unique power to do something beyond the laws of time and space. It showed that Jesus Christ was God, the Creator. Now, how old was that bread?

Ironically, the same question, "Why would God trick us?" could similarly be posed to those who believe in an old earth too. If you were to draw out a timeline of history, going back to the very beginning (non-existence into being), one would trace the universe back to its currently observable beginnings and establish a timeline that is say this long:

Creation (13.8 billion years ago) ----- Present

In the old earth model, creation would be time-stamped at the big bang, stage of dust, crystals, etc.. at the stage of the earliest, most rudimentary elements that modern science can observe/conceive of. Currently, modern science puts this at 13.8 billion years ago, give or take a few million years.

But as science improves and more is learned about the natural universe, the hypothesized age of the earth will get increasing older. We have already gone from thousands of years, to millions, now billions and next would be trillions. A timeline would then look like this:

Creation (trillions) ----- Creation (billions) ----- Present

So in a generation or so, the old earth (billions camp) will actually be young earth people compared to the old earth (trillions camp). Ironically, then the question might be turned on them, "Do you think God is trying to trick us? Why would He create the universe at such an advanced stage?!"

This would continue forever and ever because even though the tools of science improve, the wielders of those tools will retain the same limitations. The human mind will futilely circle around the question, what came first the chicken or the egg, the big bang or the stuff the caused the big bang, or the stuff that caused the stuff? And so as the earth spins, its inhabitants will dizzy themselves trying to answer that which is known only to God.

Now, please note, (otherwise we will miss the whole point) that the above illustration does not to make the case for either group, old or young earthers; the whole point is that those groups are actually much more alike than they think or may want to acknowledge. The age of the universe is beyond us all.

And so, God proves to be the great equalizer of scientists, philosophers, theologians and everybody in between, but not by trickery. It is the devil who deceives, promising us that through knowledge we can be like God, enticing us with this foolish pride, and we listen to him so we can elevate ourselves over each other and ultimately the Other, God Himself. But as God alone is True, He brings us back from the error of our ways to unity with Him and each other by humbling us, reminding us of our limitations. The more we know this humility, the more we can know Him, and through Him, the truth about His creation and ourselves. Who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God who doest wonders!

Question: Wait, I don't get it! So exactly how old was that bread that the Lord multiplied?

Answer: Ha! You will have to ask the Lord! Perhaps, though, not knowing the timestamp actually helps us come to know something and someone of greater importance: our own limitations, and the limitless One who's got time, the stamp, and, as the song goes, "the whole world in His hands".