



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

10315 Carey Road; Berlin, MD 21811
 302-537-6055 (church) / orthodoxdelmarva.org /
 frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org

BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 9, 2018

A Warm Welcome!

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

2019 Calendars, Pocket Planners, and Collection Envelopes

are available for pickup at the candle stand. Please ask Nissa Nancy or the ushers/greeters for assistance.

The Parish Council

The 4th quarterly meeting will take place today, Sunday, December 9th, following the coffee hour. All are welcome to attend.

Operating Account Balance in the Red

Although the yearly parish expenses have been below budgeted levels, offerings have been below budget more so, hence bills cannot be paid.

About Christmas

With all the hustle and bustle that revolves around Christmas and with all the temptations to spend the day "doing our own thing", let's not forget that Christmas is a Holy Day and belongs to the Lord Jesus; family, work, travel, entertaining, cooking, presents, etc., all come second to God. Bad habits? Break them and start new ones.



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9TH

28th Sunday of Pentecost

Conception of St. Anna

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Div. Liturgy; Coffee Hr.
 Parish Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

7:00p.m. Great Vespers

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

St. Herman of Alaska

9:00a.m. Akathist

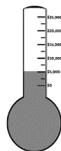
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15TH

5:00p.m. Bible Study
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16TH

Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Div. Liturgy; Coffee Hr.
 Parish Center Clean-up



Parking Lot Expansion

Only \$1,800 more is needed to finish the 2017 expansion of the parking lot. The funds are required to backfill and grade the areas next to the new parking spaces and exit road. May the Lord bless!

Helping a Needy Family

This month you are invited to donate to help buy Christmas presents for the family we will adopt this year. If you would like to donate, please earmark "Christmas Family".



Parishioners That Are Home Bound

If you or a loved one are homebound and cannot make it to Church to receive the Holy Mysteries, Fr. John would be very pleased to visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. Please be sure to schedule a visit.

Holy humility is complete trust in God.

St. Porphyrios

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 16th

Joanne Patrick

Sunday, December 23rd

Gabriela Vlahovici-Jones



A Reminder About Hospitalization

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 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.



Clean-Up for Christmas – Sunday, December 16th

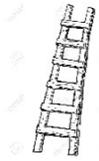
Please consider staying after coffee hour to help clean the chapel, hall, and other facilities for Christmas. Many thanks for your help!

CASH FLOWS THROUGH 11/30/18					CASH FLOWS IN DECEMBER 2018					FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	AS OF: 12/9		
Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Available	Restricted	Savings
92,415	96,353	21,383	18,939	-1,494	1,499	9,233	5,100	0	-2,634	-565	10,064	12,000

ON THE MIND

St. Nicholai Velimirovich

Until the mind is cleansed, man cannot be cleansed. But we have the mind of Christ, says the Apostle. Hence brethren, all Orthodox teaching on asceticism concentrates on one main point: on the mind of man; on the cleansing and correcting of the mind. O Lord Jesus Christ, Purity and eternal Source of purity, help us to reject our foolishness; help us to reason according to Thy mind.



ON THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

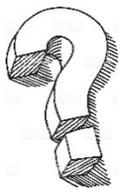
St. Isaac the Syrian

The ladder to the Kingdom of Heaven is hidden within you, and within your soul. Dive down into yourself, away from sin, and there you will find the steps by which you can ascend.

ON HONOR

St. Gregory of Nyssa

Know to what extent the Creator has honored you above all the rest of creation. The sky is not an image of God, nor is the moon, nor the sun, nor the beauty of the stars, nor anything of what can be seen in creation. You alone have been made the image of the Reality that transcends all understanding, the likeness of imperishable beauty, the imprint of true divinity, the recipient of beatitude, the seal of the true light. When you turn to him you become that which he is himself...There is nothing so great among beings that it can be compared with your greatness. God is able to measure the whole heaven with his span. The earth and the sea are enclosed in the hollow of his hand. And although he is so great and holds all creation in the palm of his hand, you are able to hold him, he dwells in you and moves with you without constraint, for he has said, 'I will live and move among them.'



ON PURPOSE

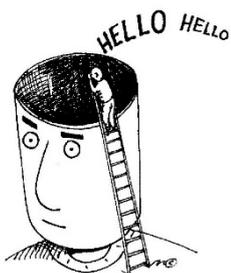
St John of Kronstadt

Brethren! what is the purpose of our earthly life? It is, that, after our trial by earthly affliction and misfortunes, and after our gradual advancement in virtue, by means of the divine gifts, given to us in the sacraments, we may rest, after our death, in the Lord, the peace of our souls.

ON MARRIAGE

St. John Chrysostom

The husband and wife should be similar to the hand and the eye. When the hand hurts, the eyes should be crying. And when the eyes cry, the hand should wipe away the tears.



ON EMPTINESS

St. Porphyrios

When people are empty of Christ, a thousand and on other things come and fill them up: jealousies, hatreds, boredom, melancholy, resentment, a worldly outlook, earthly pleasures. Try to fill your soul with Christ so that it's not empty.

Love Christ and put nothing before His love. Christ is everything. He is the source of life, the ultimate desire. He is everything. Everything beautiful is in Christ.

USING YOUR MIND TO RISE ABOVE IMPULSES

By Fr. Alexis Trader / AncientChristianWisdom.com

It has often been said that executive functioning is part of that which makes us uniquely human, separating us from the animal kingdom and allowing for freedom, creativity, and complex problem solving. It is executive functioning that helps us manage time, pay attention, plan, organize, remember details, and use experience as a guide for future action. But when impulsivity takes over, all these gifts inherent in executive functioning seem to vanish and the frontal lobe activity responsible for executive functioning appears to shut down almost completely.

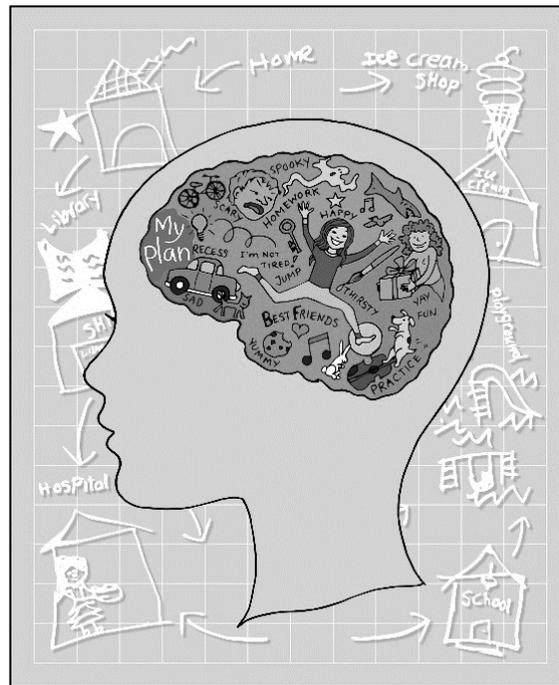
Impulsive behavior undercuts executive functioning in such a way that an impulsive person may act not very differently from a beast. The impulsive pounce on the desire of the moment without thoughtful reflection, without higher goals, without treasuring the gift of time, without a sense of the past, and without reckoning the consequences in the future. Saint John Chrysostom has some rather harsh words for such a state: "Consider then what a misfortune it would be for us to fall down of our own accord from the nature

of human beings to that of beasts, when Christ is willing to make us equal to angels. For to serve the belly, to be possessed by the desire of riches, to be given to anger, to bite, to kick, is to become not human beings, but beasts. Some say that even the beasts have by nature a single passion. But when human beings cast away the dominion of reason, tear themselves away from the commonwealth of God's devising, give themselves up to all the passions, they are no longer merely beasts, but many-formed motley monsters" (Homily 2 on John). Clearly for the fathers, the reason or executive functioning is meant to regulate behavior in accord with God's will, and the failure to do so, makes us not like beasts, but far beneath them. The aim here is not to make the impulsive feel even worse when their executive functioning is again operative to reflect on the past, but rather to encourage them to maintain

that executive functioning in good form in the present regardless of the particular temptation that beckons. After all, the impulsive person reacts to external stimuli and acts without engaging in the normal processes of executive functioning. When this type of behavior becomes the modus operandi, the person is reduced to reacting rather than acting. On the other hand, the person whose executive functioning is well honed makes decisions thoughtfully and carefully. Not only is such a person more apt to experience success in studies, career, and interpersonal relationships, but of great import for the present discussion, that person

will wisely weigh the pros and cons of impulsive activity when the impulse arises and will make a decision truly in his or her own best interest.

The holy fathers recognized the importance of executive functioning and admonished their followers to employ it to seek a higher purpose: namely, virtue and union with God. Lactantius who served as counselor to Emperor Constantine once wrote an insightful passage about what we today would call executive functioning. Lactantius writes, "For the mind, which exercises control



over the body, appears to be placed in the highest part, the head, as God is in heaven; but when it is engaged in any reflection, it appears to pass to the breast, and, as it were, to withdraw to some secret recess, that it may elicit and draw forth counsel, as it were, from a hidden treasury. And therefore, when we are intent upon reflection, and when the mind, being occupied, has withdrawn itself to the inner depth, we are accustomed neither to hear the things which sound about us, nor to see the things which stand in our way" (On the Workmanship of God, or the Formation of Man). The value of the executive functioning for the problem of impulsivity is clear. When we are fully engaged in executive functioning, we neither hear the sound of temptation, nor see the tempting sight, but find ourselves in another safer place. If that place is also with God, we find ourselves in an unassailable fortress. On a

practical level, this suggests that when impulses arise, it may be useful to use that faculty, for instance, to read Scripture and try to understand what how it can be applied to life or to focus on important details in Christ's teachings and make connections between them. In letter 125 to Rusticus, Saint Jerome even mentioned how he would study the Hebrew language in order to avoid giving in to sinful impulses. Such study necessitates the use of the prefrontal cortex for the purpose of executive functioning. And when executive functioning is active, impulses can be seen for what they are and handled accordingly.

Saint Theophan the Recluse provides another excellent example of using the executive functioning for dealing with impulses, not only at the moment they arise, but even beforehand through wise preparation. He writes, "We all ought to have an individual preparation. Every day, with your morning prayers, survey all possible contingencies, and in accordance with the thoughts and feelings which they might arouse in you, prepare counter-thoughts and feelings, and enclose them with godly reflections to make them inwardly strong. Do the very same thing every time you see something approaching: Quickly survey what could happen, and arm yourself with tools to counteract it. The unexpected dumbfounds and upsets the soul, and when it is upset, it can have neither strength nor understanding. This preparation consists in not giving in to impressions, and not letting any arousing movement through to the heart. Here a sight, there a sound or a word, an impulse or something else falls upon the heart, as does a stone on calm water...and the circles of thoughts and impulses spread in all directions. Struggle against them! But

if you do not let anything reach the heart, if in advance you strengthen the surface of the heart with counter-thoughts and counter-feelings, so that it becomes like ice covering the water, then all these stones coming from the outside will bounce off, testifying by their noise that they have struck, but have not reached the inside" (Psalm 118 A Commentary by Saint Theophan the Recluse, Verse 60, p.163-64). On the one hand, the Saint suggests planning for impulses and for responding to them in a God-pleasing way. On the other hand, he advises us to keep that plan in mind as we go throughout the day, so impulses do not surprise us or captivate our attention that we keep jealously for Christ alone. All of this suggests a pathway to peace even in the midst of temptations and impulses on every side. This is what is meant to use the executive functioning in a God-pleasing way.

Just as giving in to impulses can become habitual, so can the use of executive functioning with a little effort and the grace of God become a way of life. Saint Athanasios the Great writes, "Those who become disciples of Christ, instead of fighting each other, are prepared to withstand the demons by their habits and their virtuous actions. They defeat them and mock their captain the devil, so that in youth they are self-restrained, in temptations they endure, in labors they persevere, when insulted they are patient, when robbed they make light of it: and, wonderful as it is, they despise even death and become martyrs of Christ" (On the Incarnation of the Word). This is the promise of transformation, the hope of peace, and the victory in Christ offered to the impulsive who will wisely use their minds for the sake of the virtues and fully give their hearts to the Savior of their souls.

ON GOD'S LOVE FOR ALL

St. Maximos the Confessor

God, Who is by nature good and dispassionate, loves all men equally as His handiwork. But He glorifies the virtuous man because in his will he is united to God. At the same time, in His goodness he is merciful to the sinner and by chastising him in this life brings him back to the path of virtue. Similarly, a man of good and dispassionate judgment also loves all men equally. He loves the virtuous man because of his nature and the probity of his intention; and he loves the sinner, too, because of his nature and because in his compassion he pities him for foolishly stumbling in darkness.

