



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 8, 2019

A Warm Welcome!

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



Orthodoxy 101 Class – Resumes Today – Dec. 8th

A 30-minute class is being offered during the end of coffee hour on Sundays, from November through January, which covers the basics of Orthodox Christianity. All are invited to attend!

Choir Rehearsal – Tuesday, Dec. 17th

There will be a choir practice on 12/17 @ 6:30pm to prepare for the Nativity services and for Christmas caroling. This practice is open to everyone.

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.



Confession Before Christmas

Time for the most important Christmas preparation we can undertake is running out. Let’s not forget to prepare the cave of our innermost chamber for Christ through a good Confession.



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”.



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.



Clean-Up for Christmas – Sunday, December 22nd

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

Our Directory of Parishioners and Friends

is currently being updated. If you attend Christ the Savior Mission even infrequently and are not yet listed in our directory, please fill out a directory form in the back of the church. An updated directory will be made available at the candle stand in early 2020. Questions, please see Nissa Nancy. Thank you!



2020 Annual Parish Meeting - Save the Date

Sunday, January 26th, following the Divine Liturgy. All asked to attend.

2019 Stewardship Update

\$8,946 is needed before December 31 to meet our Stewardship goals.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8TH

25th Sunday of Pentecost

8:40am Hours
 9:00am Div. Liturgy; Coffee Hour
 Orthodoxy 101 Class

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH

7:00pm Great Vespers

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

St. Herman of Alaska

9:00am Akathist

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

5:00pm Bible Study
 6:00pm Great Vespers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH

Holy Forefathers of Christ

8:40am Hours
 9:00am Div. Liturgy; Coffee Hour
 Orthodoxy 101 Class

When the garden of your soul is full of thistles (i.e. passions), do not try to uproot them, for as long as you concern yourself with them you will always end up being injured and infected by germs. Concentrate all your energy on the flowers of your soul, water them and then the thistles will wither themselves. And the best flower of all is your love for Christ. If you water this and it grows, all the thistles will die off.

St Porphyrios of Kafsokalyvia

+	OPERATING			EARMARKED			ACCOUNTS		READER SCHEDULE	
	THRU 11/30	THIS MONTH	THIS YEAR	THRU 11/30	THIS MONTH	THIS YEAR	OPERATING			
INCOME	98,453	3,733	102,186	18,176	0	18,176	EARMARKED	13,680	12/8	Megan Wilkinson
EXPENSE	101,871	9,261	111,132	8,665	0	8,665	SAVINGS	12,000	12/15	Rdr. George Kaloroumakis
NET	-3,418	-5,528	-8,946	+9,511	0	+9,511	BUILDING	5,000	12/22	Gabriela Vlahovici-Jones
									12/29	Beth Dunbar

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

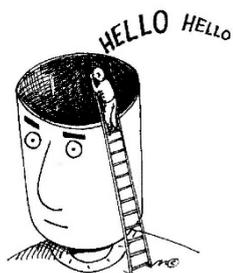
St John of Kronstadt

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.



SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA

Commemorated December 13th and August 9th



St. Herman of Alaska was one of the first Orthodox missionaries to the new world, and is considered by Orthodox to be the patron saint of the Americas.

St. Herman was born in the town of Serpukhov in the Moscow Diocese around 1756. Herman is his name in monasticism; his birth name is unknown. At 16, he entered the monastic life at the Trinity-St. Sergius Hermitage near St. Petersburg.

There, while still a novice, he developed a severe throat infection or abscess. After fervent prayer before an icon of the Theotokos, he collapsed into a deep sleep. During this sleep, he saw a vision in which he was greeted by the Virgin Mary and healed. Upon waking the next day, there was no trace of the past infirmity. Approximately five years

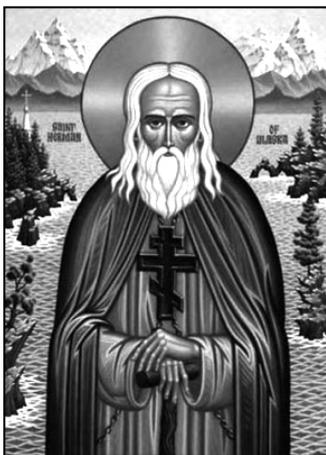
later he transferred from Trinity - St. Sergius Hermitage to Valaam Monastery. Eventually he was tonsured a monk, though he was never ordained to the priesthood. While at Valaam, he was under the spiritual guidance of Abbot Nazarius who had played a significant role in the revitalization of spiritual life in Russia. During this time, the head of the Golikov-Shelikov Company, Gregory Shelikov, visited Valaam and made a request for several monks to begin a mission into the Alaskan territory. Fr. Herman was selected, with 7 others.

Father Herman and the other monks arrived on Kodiak Island on September 24, 1794, aboard a ship named The Three Hierarchs. The monks educated and converted the native Aleuts, and as time progressed they found themselves protecting the natives from exploitation and abuse. Because of this moral stance the monks themselves were abused, arrested and physically threatened. In time, enduring hardship, inclement weather, illness and more, Father Herman stood as the only remainder from the original band of missionaries, the others either being martyred for their faith, dying of natural causes or returning to Russia.

Father Herman felt it his duty to protect the Aleuts from exploitation. He defended them against the often cruel treatment of those who controlled the colony. His concern for their needs have been documented, expressed in letters sent to the former administrator of the colony, Simeon Ivanovich

Yanovsky. Father Herman also would intercede before the governors on behalf of the oppressed. He helped the needy in whatever way he could.

Between the years of 1808 and 1818, Father Herman lived on Spruce Island. Spruce Island is almost completely covered by forest and is separated by a strait about a mile and a quarter wide from Kodiak Island. Selecting this island for the location of his hermitage he called the land there "New Valaam" after the monastery from which he had left to come to America. He dug a cave in the ground and lived out his first full summer there. It was in this cave that he was later buried. To endure the harsh winters he constructed a cell in which he lived for more than forty years.



A small chapel was built as well, along with a school and guest house. The local people would visit him often. Food was produced from an experimental garden he planted for himself and the orphans of the land. He devoted his life to prayer and to performing those services he could do as a simple monk who had not been ordained to the priesthood.

His love for the people of Alaska was sincere and he found happiness in being around the children. An epidemic plagued Alaskans when an American ship made land at Kodiak. Fr. Herman remained with the ill and dying, offering them constant comfort and ceaseless prayer. It is said that his love was so genuine that he could see into the hearts of his spiritual children and help them.

The natives regarded him as their intercessor before God. When there was a tidal wave on the Island, Fr. Herman took an icon of the Theotokos, placed it on the beach and assured the people that the water would not rise beyond the place where the icon was, and it did not. When there was a great fire on the island, it is said that he dug a trench and stayed the flames. Prior to his death he foretold that there would be no priest to bury him and that he would be forgotten for 30 years. He died on November 15, 1837, but was not buried until December 13 because a priest could not come to serve the funeral, and was forgotten until the first investigation of his life in 1867 by Bishop Peter of Alaska.

ASK FATHER: 4 QUESTIONS / 4 ANSWERS

Q. Why do the Church's guidelines say that we are to go to Confession at least during the four fasting seasons in order to receive Holy Communion?

A. In answer to your question: the Church's guidelines concerning Confession before Communion are actually much stricter than four times a year, calling for frequent communicants to receive Confession at least once a month (see the OCA Guidelines for Clergy). These guidelines were put in place long ago to help prepare us for a joyful and untroubled union with God through the Body and Blood of Christ. However, as we have said elsewhere, guidelines are not unbendable rules which require legalistic fulfillment, rather they are meant to be pastorally applied in a manner helpful to our own personal circumstances. Guidelines are meant to "meet us where we are at" and help lead us up to heaven. For this reason, as your priest, and as one who must give an account for your souls (Heb. 13:17), it seemed appropriate to modify the guidelines, lessening the "rule" to only four times a year, to encourage those unaccustomed to making regular confession to at least start doing so during the fasts of the year. If this guideline is still too difficult, please speak with me and we can address your personal circumstances.



Q. Why is it said that Confession should precede receiving Holy Unction and Holy Communion?

A. Each Sacrament in the Orthodox Church has its own unique function in bringing about the healing and restoration of man, who, as we read in Genesis, was tricked by the serpent and became sick and subject to death having been infected with the poisonous venom of sin. Confession is the first step on the road to healing, for through Confession man can spit out the devil's deadly poison and purge himself from sin. Then once the poison has been expelled, the spiritual and physical wounds left by the bite can be healed through the anointing of Holy Unction. And through the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ, the Sustenance of eternal life, man can regain his strength and return to health of body and soul. Yet, just as anointing a snake bite with oil and feeding a man healthy food, will not bring about healing unless the poison is first removed, so too the reception of Holy Unction and Holy Communion will not profit a man unless he first purges himself of sin through Holy Confession.

Q. How often should I confess my sins?

A. One should confess one's sins and spit out the devil's poison whenever one is spiritually bitten and one's health is in danger. One may reach this point from a single deadly bite, such as murder, adultery, fornication, or some other very serious sin, or from a series of lesser bites, such as anger, overeating, judging others, or lustful thoughts. As a general rule, the frequency of one's confession should depend on the amount of poison with which one has been infected, one's personal desire for spiritual health, and the Church's guidelines, which exist to heal us and save us from spiritual death.

Q. Is it necessary to confess every time I receive Holy Communion?

A. If one receives from the Holy Chalice infrequently, say once or twice a year, then yes, one should go to confession each time before receiving Holy Communion. However, for the frequent communicant, one who receives Holy Communion every Sunday, it is not necessary to confess one's sins before each time one receives, that is, unless one has fallen into a serious sin. In such cases, one should not approach the Chalice until one has first confessed the sin and fulfilled the advice or penance of one's father confessor. Finally, although it is not necessary for the frequent communicant to confess his or her sins each time he or she approaches the Chalice, sacramental confession should be made at least during each of the four fasting seasons (as said earlier), lest the poison received over time through small sins lead to the same spiritual death as that which comes through a single deadly bite.