



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF NOVEMBER 26, 2006

A Question / Answer Period

will be held today, Sunday, November 26th, following the Divine Liturgy during the coffee hour. During the period Fr. John will answer questions on the Orthodox Faith from parishioners and inquirers. There has been good feedback on the "Ask Father" section of the bulletin, and it is hoped that taking this section from the printed page to the coffee hour will be likewise helpful and enjoyable for participants. The Question / Answer Period will be offered on a monthly basis, please check the schedule to find out which Sundays it will be held.

A Parish Directory

will be compiled and distributed sometime after the New Year. In the next few weeks everyone should receive a small packet in the mail asking you to submit your updated contact information as well as your birthday, namesday, anniversary, and slava. If you do not receive the packet in the mail, it is probably because we do not have your correct mailing address, so please pick up a packet of forms from the back of the church. It is hoped that the directory will help bring our already close-knit parish even closer together. And it will also allow the priest to congratulate those celebrating their birthday, namesday, anniversary, or slava, without skipping over anyone (hopefully!). If for any reason you do not wish to participate in the directory, or if you have any questions / concerns, please speak with Fr. John.

Commemoration Lists

All parishioners are asked to update the list of names, both living and departed, they have submitted for commemoration at the Divine Liturgy. Commemoration sheets will be sent home with the forms for the parishioner directory. Please take a moment to submit your new list, as the previous lists are being replaced. If you have any questions, please speak with Fr. John.



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH

24TH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour
 Question / Answer Period

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH

7:00p.m. Compline; Confessions

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH

APOSTLE ANDREW

7:00p.m. Compline; Confessions

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

6:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3RD

25TH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

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

Confessions also heard by appointment.

SAINT SILOUAN ON HUMILITY

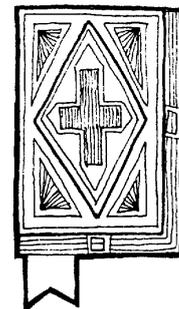
The Lord said, "Learn from Me to be meek and humble of heart." There are many types of humility. You can be obedient and reproach yourself in everything – this is a form of humility. Another can repent his sins and count himself the lowest before Christ – this is also a form of humility. But when a soul sees the Lord through the Holy Spirit in all His meekness and humility, then it also becomes humbled to its limits. This is a special sort of humility which cannot be described, it can only be experienced through the Holy Spirit. And if people could experience the Lord through the Holy Spirit, they would all change – the wealthy would despise their wealth, the learned their studies, the powerful their glory and authority, and all would be humbled and would live in great peace and love, and the earth would be filled with great joy. He who has experienced God through the Holy Spirit has a different understanding and taste.

ASK FATHER: 3 QUESTIONS / 3 ANSWERS

Q. Father, what do you find to be the most difficult part of being a priest?

A. Well, these are hard questions to answer and since I have only been a priest for about five months, I reserve the right to change my answer later!

For me, the most difficult part of being a priest is preaching the Word of God. This is not because the Gospel is not "Good News" because it is, and in fact it is very good news – Jesus Christ has overcome sin, death, and the devil, and we are being saved as adopted children of God and inheritors of the Father's Heavenly Kingdom! The difficulty arises because according to Christ the only way to accept the blessings which He has extended to us is through repentance ("Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!") and by denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and following Him. In fact, if one reads the Gospel, one will see that the majority of the Lord's teaching is about our preparation for the Kingdom (the Cross) rather than what life in the next age will actually be like (the Resurrection). This being the case, with emphasis given to our personal and communal repentance and ascetical struggle, preaching the Gospel is not always easy. And more than this, it is a humbling vocation, as I often find myself preaching and teaching people who have more zeal and who better fulfill the commandments of Christ than I do. But I rejoice in this as both a chastisement and inspiration to myself, and as another confirmation that God is working and saving His beloved people.



Q. How old was Saint Joseph the Betrothed when he became the guardian of the Mother of God?

A. According to early Church Tradition, Saint Joseph was eighty years old when betrothed to the Virgin Mary. The Chaste Joseph, as he is sometimes called, was a widower who had four sons and two daughters from his previous marriage; in the Scriptures, these children are called the brothers and sisters of Jesus, though there is no blood relation since Joseph was not the father of Jesus. Besides his irreproachable, trustworthy, and honorable life, the elder Joseph's great age made him a suitable guardian for the young virgin girl who had vowed to live in perpetual virginity. When the Virgin Mary was found to be with child the elderly Joseph feared to take her as his wife, not because people would think that he fathered the child because he was too old for this, but because people would think that she had fallen into sin with another man; this is why Saint Joseph thought to put her away privately (Matt. 1:19).

Saint Joseph reposed at the age of about 100. The last reference to him in Holy Scripture is in Chapter 2 of St. Luke's Gospel, when he, together with the Virgin Mary, brought the 12-year-old Christ to the Temple in Jerusalem. By the time of the Lord's crucifixion the elderly Joseph had already reposed; since Jewish law did not require the Virgin Mary to be entrusted to the brothers of Christ because they were only half-brothers, the Lord entrusted the care of His Mother to his beloved disciple Saint John the Evangelist.

Q. What is the Orthodox Church's teaching on the cremation?

A. The following is taken from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: "Because the Orthodox Faith affirms the fundamental goodness of creation, it understands the body to be an integral part of the human person and the temple of the Holy Spirit, and expects the resurrection of the dead. The Church considers cremation to be the deliberate desecration and destruction of what God has made and ordained for us. The Church instead insists that the body be buried so that the natural physical process of decomposition may take place. The Church does not grant funerals, either in the sanctuary, or at the funeral home, or at any other place, to persons who have chosen to be cremated. Additionally, memorial services with kolyva (boiled wheat) are not allowed in such instances, inasmuch as the similarity between the "kernel of wheat" and the "body" has been intentionally destroyed."



Exceptions are made for circumstances where it may not be avoided (when civil authority demands it, or epidemics) or if it may be sought for good cause as determined by the local hierarchy, but when a cremation is willfully chosen for no good cause by the one who is deceased, he or she is not permitted a funeral in the church and may also

be permanently excluded from liturgical prayers for the departed.

CAN YOU SLEEP WHILE THE WIND BLOWS?

Years ago, a farmer owned land along the Atlantic seacoast. He constantly advertised for hired hands. Most people were reluctant to work on farms along the Atlantic. They dreaded the awful storms that raged across the Atlantic, wreaking havoc on the buildings and crops. As the farmer interviewed applicants for the job, he received a steady stream of refusals.

Finally, a short, thin man, well past middle age, approached the farmer. "Are you a good farm hand?" the farmer asked him. "Well, I can sleep when the wind blows," answered the little man.

Although puzzled by this answer, the farmer, desperate for help, hired him. The little man worked well around the farm, busy from dawn to dusk, and the farmer felt satisfied with the man's work. Then one night the wind howled loudly in from offshore. Jumping out of bed, the farmer grabbed a lantern and rushed next door to the hired hand's sleeping quarters. He shook the little man and yelled, "Get up! A storm is coming! Tie things down before they blow away!" The little man rolled over in bed and said firmly, "No sir. I told you, I can sleep when the wind blows."



Enraged by the response, the farmer was tempted to fire him on the spot. Instead, he hurried

outside to prepare for the storm. To his amazement, he discovered that all of the haystacks had been covered with tarpaulins. The cows were in the barn, the chickens were in the coops, and the doors were barred. The shutters were tightly secured. Everything was tied down.

Nothing could blow away. The farmer then understood what his hired hand meant, so he returned to his bed to also sleep while the wind blew.

Moral of the Story

When you're prepared, spiritually, mentally, and physically, you have nothing to fear. Can you sleep when the wind blows through your life? The hired hand in the story was able to sleep because he had secured the farm against the storm. We secure ourselves against the storms of life by grounding ourselves in the Word of God.

By an unknown author

SAINT PHILARET THE MERCIFUL

From a village of Paphlagonia (modern Turkey), Philaret was at first a man of some substance, but, as a result of his constant almsgiving, he became utterly destitute. He was not afraid of poverty, and went on with his charitable works with trust in the Lord who has said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy", paying no attention to the disapproval of his wife and children. Once, when he was ploughing in his meadow, a man came to him with the news of the death of his ox in harness, and of his inability to plough with only one ox, so Philaret unharnessed his own and gave it to him. He gave away his remaining horse to a man who was called away to battle, and the calf from his remaining cow – and, when he saw how the cow pined after her calf, gave the man the cow as well. And so the aged Philaret was left hungry in an empty house. But he prayed to God, entrusting himself to Him. God does not abandon the righteous man, allowing him to be shamed in his hope. At that time, the Empress Irene was on the throne with her young son Constantine and, in accordance with the custom of the time, the Empress sent men through the whole Empire to find the best and most distinguished maiden to wed her son. By divine Providence, these men happened upon Philaret's home and beheld his very beautiful and modest grand-daughter Maria and they took her to Constantinople. The Emperor was well-pleased with her and took her to wife, and brought Philaret and all his family to the capital, showering honor and wealth upon them. Philaret did not become proud in this change of fortune but, with gratitude to God, performed still greater deeds of charity than before, remaining thus for the rest of his days. At the age of ninety, he called all his children to him and, having blessed them and instructed them to cleave to God and His Law, foretold to each of them how their lives would develop, just as our forefather Jacob did aforetime. When he had done this, he went to a monastery and there gave his soul into God's hands. At his death, his face shone like the sun and a sweet fragrance arose from his body, and miracles were worked over his relics. This righteous man of God went to his rest in 797. His wife and all his children and grandchildren lived and died in the Lord.



From the Prologue by Saint Nikolai of Zicha