



Parable of the Rich Fool

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD
23RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
ST. ALEXANDER NEVSKY

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

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH
7:00p.m. Bible Study

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH
6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH
24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour
Parish Council Meeting

Fasting appears gloomy until one steps into its arena. But begin and you will see what light it brings after darkness, what freedom from bonds, what release after a burdensome life...

St. Theophan the Recluse

READER SCHEDULE
Sunday, Nov. 30th
Sandy St. Germain
Sunday, Dec. 7th
Jen Alexion



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF NOVEMBER 23, 2008

Please Remember in Prayer

Jane Koshutko (recovering with family in Baltimore, MD) Bill Parrish, Robert Evanusa, Olga Leisure, Valentina, Nina Gordon, Fr. Christian, Carol Boris, Constantina & Christos, Alicia & Susannah. If you have a prayer request, please let Fr. John know.

Turkeys for the Needy

As Thanksgiving is this week, and one of the best ways to give thanks is to sharing our blessings with those in need, we will have a collection to buy turkeys for needy families. Should you wish to make a donation, please do so in the back of the church in the earmarked basket. If you have any questions, please see Fr. John or Mike McFarland. May the Lord bless your generosity!



New Metropolitan Elected

On November 12th, Wednesday, the Holy Synod of Bishops, accepted the vote of the All-American Council and confirmed Bishop Jonah of Fort Worth, Texas - a bishop for only 12 days! - as Archbishop of Washington and New York, Metropolitan of All-America and Canada. Axios! Axios! ("He Is Worthy!") More information about Metropolitan Jonah can be found on OCA.org.

Bible Study – Monday, Nov. 24th

This Monday at 7pm, there will be a Bible Study at our church. The topic is the Nativity of the Lord. All are invited! Please bring a Bible, and, if you like, a friend!



A Word About Scrip

Did you know that you could benefit the church by purchasing gift cards to almost any store? These gift cards make great "gifts" but also can be used to by groceries, gasoline, or other day-to-day things. Think about it – every time you go to the pump you could be helping your church without paying even a cent more for your gas. And of course, the same hold true for buying Christmas gifts! For more info, please see Jen Alexion or Kathy Parrish.

Choir Practice Today

Sunday, November 23rd, following the Coffee Hour.

Next Parish Council Meeting

Sunday, November 30th, following the Coffee Hour.

Scheduling Confession

Fr. John is available at just about any time to hear confessions: before or after services, classes, or movie nights; or at any other time by appointment.

GREAT PRINCE ST. ALEXANDER NEVSKY

Commemorated November 23rd / written by Jane M. deVyver, M.Th., Ph.D.

Grand Prince St. Alexander Nevsky lived in the mid-13th century. He is an example of how public service can be combined with an exemplary God-centered Christian life. At the end of his life he was tonsured a monk, and reposed in 1263. He was glorified as a saint just 20 years later, and for over 700 years he has been highly revered as a patron and protector of Russia and of the Orthodox Faith, as he was in his lifetime. In 1236 he turned back a Swedish invasion at the Neva River (from which he took the name, "Nevsky").

Not long after, the Mongol Tartars started their invasion from the east, and laid waste to most of the Russian lands, brutally slaughtering all those who resisted, but allowing the people to practice their Orthodox Faith if they did not resist, and if tribute were paid. In 1241, the city-state of Novgorod, in the far northeast of Russia, begged St. Alexander to protect them against a far worse enemy than the Mongols - the German Teutonic and Livonian knights -- brutal crusaders, whose purpose, besides capturing their lands, was to force the Russians to renounce their Orthodox Faith and become Roman Catholic. Thus, with much wisdom, St. Alexander humbled himself and paid tribute to the Mongol Tartars, so he could focus on defending Russia against the worse Western crusaders. In the famous "battle on the ice" in 1242, St. Alexander led the Russian people to victory over the western invaders, and protected their Orthodox Faith.

In 1710 Tsar Peter I, the Great, established a monastery dedicated to St. Alexander, built on the banks of the Neva River, on the legendary site of St. Alexander's victory over the Swedes, and in 1724 he had the saint's relics brought to St. Pe-

tersburg from the city of Vladimir. Tsar Peter commissioned an enormous, ornate, silver reliquary to hold the saint's relics, and had them placed in the monastery's Holy Trinity Cathedral. This (empty) reliquary is on display in the Hermitage Museum, and today a more modest reliquary holds the saint's relics. It is located in the cathedral, up front, on the right, readily accessible for veneration. Since the 1917 revolution, the buildings of the St. Alexander Lavra Monastery were used primarily by the government, except for the Trinity Cathedral that was one of the few "working" churches in St. Petersburg. Functioning also since the end of World War II is the Theological Seminary and Academy, which is adjacent to the monastery. At long last, in the Spring of 1996 the Lavra itself was given back to the Church by the State, and reopened as a monastery.



St. Alexander from the 1938 film.

In addition to three public cemeteries, where many famous people are buried, the Lavra also has its own cemetery, located behind the cathedral. Buried here is the recently glorified saint, the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, Benjamin, who was martyred in 1921. This cemetery also contains the graves of twenty monks of the monastery who were martyred right there by the communists, shot in front of a wall, which still bears the many bullet holes. Someone scratched into the wall: "Here twenty monks of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra were shot in 1919," and "Holy monk-martyrs, pray to God for us."

In Russia today St. Alexander continues to be a very beloved saint, and Alexander (the diminutive form is Sasha) is perhaps the most popular name in Russia.

ORTHODOX CHURCH STOLEN BRICK BY BRICK

Posted 11/14/08 on directionstoorthodoxy.org

Moscow (AP) — Wanted: One missing Russian church. Last seen in July. Reward for its return. Orthodox officials in a central Russian region say an abandoned church building that was to be put back into use has been stolen by local villagers. Orthodox priest Vitaly of the Ivanovo-Voskresenskaya diocese says officials last saw the two-story Church of Resurrection intact in late July. Sometime in early October, however, people from the nearby village of Komarovo, northeast of Moscow, dismantled the building, he said. Villagers apparently sold it to a local businessman, one ruble



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(about 4 cents) per brick, Vitaly said. Orthodox priests use only one name. "Of course, this is blasphemy," he told The Associated Press. "These people have to realize they committed a grave sin." Vitaly said police were investigating the theft. The 200-year-old building, which no longer had its icons and other religious valuables, was a school for disabled children during the Soviet era before it was closed down in 1998 and turned over to the church. Vitaly said the diocese was thinking of reopening it for services. The Orthodox church has experienced a major resurgence in Russia and has restored or built thousands of churches. In poorer, rural regions, vandals or petty thieves regularly steal gilded icons or donations from churches and sell them for alcohol or drugs.

FOR CONSIDERATION

From the Prologue of St. Nikolai Velimirovich

Fear of God drives all fear from the hearts of men. In every great hierarchy of the Orthodox Church, we see meekness and fearlessness wonderfully united. St. Nicholas grabbed the sword of the executioner and pulled it away so that innocent men would not be beheaded. St. Chrysostom reproached the Empress Eudoxia for her misdeeds without consideration for the unpleasantness and danger to his own life, to which he was exposed as a result. And there are many, many other examples similar to this: Emperor Valentinian the Elder, upon hearing of Ambrose's stern criticism of him, said: "I knew of your fearlessness; that is why I helped you to be chosen as bishop. Correct our faults as the Law of God teaches, and heal our unrighteousness."

Once, when a riot occurred in Thessalonica, at which time about seven thousand people were beheaded by the decree of Emperor Theodosius the Great, St. Ambrose became so enraged at the emperor that, when the emperor visited Milan and wished to enter the church, the saint forbade him. The emperor said to Ambrose: "Even David sinned and was not deprived of God's mercy." To this the bishop replied: "As you have imitated David in sin, imitate him also in repentance." The emperor was ashamed, turned back and repented bitterly of the sin he committed.



ON CARING FOR THE POOR

- ❖ God wanted to unite people among themselves. So He made things in such a way that the good of one is inseparably bound to being useful to others. It is in this way that the world is united. (*St. John Chrysostom*)
- ❖ Send your treasures to the heavenly storage room. Deposit your wealth in God's Bank, distributing it to the poor, the orphans and the widows, so that you can receive a million times more in the Second Coming. (*Elder Joseph the Hesychast*)
- ❖ A holy soul cares for his neighbor, either close at hand or far away. (*St. Nikolai Velimirovich*)
- ❖ Find out how much God has given you, and from it take what you need; the remainder which you do not require is needed by others. The excesses of the rich are the necessities of the poor. (*St. Augustine*)
- ❖ The poor are the treasures of the good things that we look for, the keepers of the gates of the Kingdom. (*St. Gregory of Nyssa*)
- ❖ Almsgiving above all else requires money, but even this shines with a brighter luster when the alms are given from our poverty. The widow who paid in the two mites was poorer than any human, but she outdid them all. (*St. John Chrysostom*)
- ❖ Come to the help of these, you who fast. Become generous to the unfortunate brethren. That food which you fasted from, give to the hungry. Let the just fear of God equalize all. (*St. Gregory of Nyssa*)
- ❖ It is not enough to help the poor. We must help them with generosity and without grumbling. We must help them gladly and happily. When the poor are helped, there ought to be these two conditions: generosity and joy. (*St. John Chrysostom*)
- ❖ The soul that has learned of God's grace to pray, feels love and compassion for every created thing, and in particular for mankind, for whom the Lord suffered on the Cross, and His soul was heavy for every one of us. (*St. Clement of Alexandria*)
- ❖ Feeding the hungry is a greater work than raising the dead. (*St. John Chrysostom*)
- ❖ Love the poor and through them you will find mercy. (*St. Isaac of Syria*)

ASK FATHER: TWO QUESTIONS / TWO ANSWERS

Question: What should I do if I think that I may not have confessed a sin fully? How specific should I be in confession?



Answer: The question of how specific to be in confession is a difficult one. But before we consider it, we must remember that confession is more therapeutic than it is juridical. Confession is about being healed, not appeasing an angry God. We want to expose the sin fully so we can be healed from it. Like going to the doctor, it doesn't profit us if we conceal our ailments.

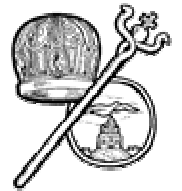
As a general rule it is good to be as specific as necessary but no more. Here's an example, which might make things easier to understand: If someone killed another person in a fight, and then went to confession, they should not simply say for instance, "I got in a fight and hurt someone", that would be concealing what really happened. But at the same time, they should not give a blow by blow account of the murder, that would be too much information. They should just simply and honestly give an account of what happened, why it happened, when it happened, who was killed, if they turned themselves in, etc., revealing all those things necessary for the priest to understand the nature of the sin so that if required he might give a penance in order to help heal the spiritual wound.

The person giving the confession will have to determine the level of detail that is necessary to fully disclose the nature of the sin. This is sometimes hard to do. But if after the confession, we realize that there are important details related to the sin that we forgot to confess or perhaps weren't spiritually attune enough to realize at the time, then we should confess that at another time. For instance, in the situation described above, if the murder was committed because of envy but the person didn't realize that at the time of confession, he should confess the sin of envy later, saying that it led to murder.

One thing to remember is that as God works with us, we will become more sensitive spiritually. We will want to expose everything in all its ugly details so that we can be fully healed. This is good, of course. Yet at the same time we should seek to preserve the sanctity of the sacrament with holy conversation. And it is important to remember that, as with any good thing, if our spiritual sensitivity becomes too extreme (leading to despair or false humility by exaggerating our confession) then it has become unhealthy. This is sometimes referred to as "over-scrupulousness". This extreme should be avoided just like the extreme of not saying enough to the point of concealing the sin. Finally, if we ever have a specific question about how much to say, it is always a good idea to just simply ask the priest.

Question: What is the Metropolitan and what are his duties?

Answer: The role and duties of the Metropolitan are outlined in the Statute of the OCA:



Among the bishops of the Church, the Metropolitan enjoys primacy, being the first among equals. He is the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, and is the diocesan bishop of one of the dioceses of the Church and bears the title, "Metropolitan of All-America and Canada." He supervises the internal and external welfare of the Church and represents it in its relations with other Orthodox Churches, religious organizations, and secular authorities. The Metropolitan's name is mentioned during liturgical services by the other bishops of the Church. The Metropolitan mentions the names of the other heads of autocephalous Orthodox Churches. The Metropolitan:

1. *Consecrates and distributes the Holy Chrism;*
2. *Provides the diocesan bishops with the Holy Relics necessary for the consecration of Church altars and Holy Antemensia;*
3. *Convenes the All-American Council, presides over it, and promulgates its decisions;*
4. *Convenes and presides over the meetings of the Holy Synod and of the Metropolitan Council;*
5. *Issues pastoral letters addressed to the bishops, clergy, and laity of the Church;*
6. *Reports to the Council concerning the life of the Church;*
7. *Initiates action to fill vacancies in the office of diocesan bishop;*
8. *Gives advice to his brother bishops, and in cases of necessity, submits their cases to the Holy Synod;*
9. *Has the right of pastoral initiative and guidance, and when necessary the right of pastoral intervention, in all matters concerning the life of the Church within the framework of the holy canons;*
10. *Receives petitions for admission of clergy from other Orthodox Churches.*