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CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF MARCH 15, 2009

SUNDAY, MARCH 15TH

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS SUNDAY

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

MONDAY, MARCH 16TH

7:00p.m. Reading Group

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18TH

7:00p.m. Presanctified Liturgy

SATURDAY, MARCH 21ST

MEMORIAL SATURDAY

9:00a.m. Memorial Service
6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 22ND

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS

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



Many are called but few chosen

If a man obeys the call to become Christian, and accepts baptism, but does not behave in a way worthy of the name he bears, accomplishing the promises given at his baptism, even though he may have been called, he is not chosen.

St. Gregory Palamas

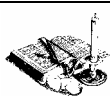
READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 22nd

Troy Duker

Sunday, March 29th

Jen Alexion



Please Remember in Prayer

Carole Boris, Kathy & Bill Parrish, Diane Evanusa, Marie, Raymond, Thomas, Judith Kocinski, Jane Koshutko, Robert Evanusa, Nicholas & Linda, Yvonne, Katherine, Michael, Gregory, Todd & Olga Leisure, Nina Gordon, Fr. Christian, Constantina & Christos. If you have a request, let Fr. John know.

Sympathy is Expressed

To Howard Peters on the repose of his youngest sister Gail († March 8, 2009). May her memory be eternal and the may the Lord grant consolation to those who knew and loved her.



Reading Group – Tomorrow

The next Reading Group will meet on Monday, March 16th at 7pm at the church. The text is "The Way into the Kingdom of Heaven" by St. Innocent of Alaska and is available for pickup at the candle stand. All are encouraged to pickup the reading, even if you cannot make the discussion group.

Choir Practice for Pascha

There will be a choir practice for Pascha on Sunday, March 22nd, following the coffee hour. This practice will be a somewhat lengthy one but a light lunch will be offered for coffee hour. If you are a choir member please do your best to be present on this day and stay for the practice. Thank you!

Fasting for Presanctified Liturgy

While the normal fast for the evening Presanctified Liturgy is a total fast for the entire day, that is from midnight the night before until the evening Liturgy, the Holy Synod of Bishops permit a mitigated but total fast from at least noon in preparation for Holy Communion. As always medication w/ prescribed food or drink, may be taken at any time.



Meals Following Presanctified Liturgy

Instead of a sign-up sheet for meals after the Presanctified Liturgies we will have potlucks. Those who wish to bring food are asked to please prepare a light lenten (no meat, dairy, or fish) dish or dessert.

New Purple Liturgical Covers

This Great Lent we are pleased to be using new purple liturgical covers. The covers were sewn by seamstresses of the parish. May the Lord bless their labors and the donors who offered for this project!



2009 Parish Council Installation

May the Lord bless our '09 Council and newly elected officers: George Hamaty (Junior Warden), Michael McFarland (Treasurer), Jen Alexion (Secretary)! Photos from the installation are on our website.

BISHOPS CALL FOR RALLY OVER ANTI-CATHOLIC BILL

HARTFORD, Connecticut (LifeSiteNews.com) - Following widespread outrage from the Catholic community, a Connecticut bill seeking unprecedented regulation of the Catholic Church has been tabled for the duration of this legislative session, which lasts until July. However, Connecticut bishops are still calling for a Wednesday rally in Hartford to oppose the bill, as it has not been definitively struck down.

Judiciary committee co-chairs Rep. Michael P. Lawlor and Sen. Andrew McDonald stated today in a press release that discussion on S.B. 1098 would be postponed until the Attorney General examined the constitutionality of the bill's precedent...

The bill, S.B. 1098, would have effectively removed any control over Church finances from the hands of the bishop, putting it into the hands of a board of between seven and thirteen laymen. The bishop would have only been an ex-officio member of the board, without the right to vote.

Instead, the authority of the bishop and pastor would be limited to "matters pertaining exclusively to religious tenets and practices." The Judiciary committee proposed the bill Thursday and put it on a legislative fast track before public outcry against the bill's unconstitutionality shook the capital.

The bill was heavily criticized by Connecticut legislators and conservative groups who perceived it as a universal threat to religious groups' right to self-government. "Our church in the state of Connecticut is facing an unprecedented intrusion by the state legislature into its own internal affairs," Bridgeport's Bishop William Lori told parishioners Friday. "If this bill were to be enacted, your bishop would have virtually no real relationship with the 87 parishes. You have to understand how radically this departs from the teaching of the Church and the discipline of the Church, and how gravely unconstitutional it is for a state to move in and try to reorganize the internal structure of the Church. It is a violation, a grave violation of religious liberty."

The committee justified the bill as needed oversight of the Church's finances. But critics of the bill charged that the move was intended as "payback" against the Catholic Church for standing in the way of same-sex "marriage" legislation, which had been adamantly sponsored by the Judiciary committee's two co-chairs. "This bill was dropped into the hopper the day before the same-sex 'marriage' bill was

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ST. JOHN THE DWARF

From the Desert Fathers

Also known as "John the Short" and "John Colobus", this remarkable desert monk (339 – 409 AD) was born in the Egyptian city of Thebes (Luxor) to a poor but devout Christian family. Following the path of his older brother, John adopted the ascetic life and became a monk in the desert of Skete. He trained under the tutelage of abbots Penwah, Poeman, and Ammoes and became renowned for his gentleness, graciousness, humility, and obedience. Though short of stature, he became a giant among the desert fathers. Various of his sayings and accounts of incidents in his life have survived, including his last words, which are said to have been, "I never followed my own will, nor did I ever teach another what I had not practiced first myself."



Abba John once said, "A house is not built by beginning at the top and working down. You must begin with the foundations in order to reach the top." They said to him, "What does this saying mean?" He said, "The foundation is our neighbor, whom we must win, and that is the place to begin. For all the commandments of Christ depend on this one."

Abba John used to say, "We have exchanged the light burden of self-accusation for the heavy one of self-justification. He also said, "Humility and the fear of God are above all virtues."

Abba John told his disciples, "I am like a man sitting under a great tree, who sees wild beasts and snakes coming against him in great numbers. When he cannot withstand them any longer, he runs to climb the tree and is saved. It is just the same with me; I sit in my cell and I am aware of evil thoughts coming against me, and when I have no more strength against them, I take refuge in God by prayer and I am saved from the enemy."

At one time Abba John said, "If a king wanted to take possession of his enemy's city, he would begin by cutting off the water and food so that his enemies, dying of hunger, would submit to him. It is the same with the passions of the flesh: if a man goes about fasting and hungry the enemies of his soul grow weak."



What is the Heart?

YOUR IDENTIFY. Your heart is the most important part of who you are. It is the center of your being, where the "real you" resides. "The heart of man reflects man" (Proverbs 27:19) As a person "thinks in his heart, so he is" (Proverbs 23:7).

YOUR CENTER. Since your physical heart is the center of your body and sends life-giving blood out to every cell, the word "heart" has been used for centuries to describe the core starting place of all your thoughts, beliefs, values, motives, and convictions.

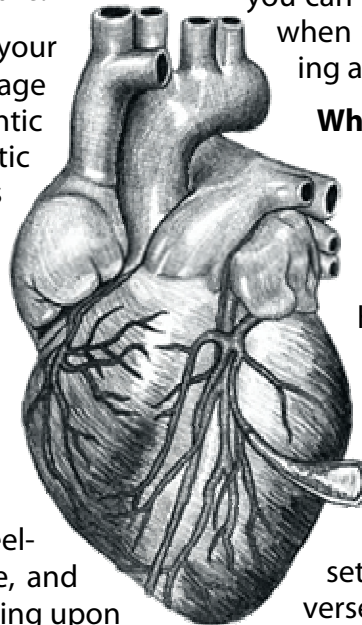
YOUR HEADQUARTERS. Your heart is the Pentagon of your operations. As a result, every area of your life is impacted by the direction of your heart.

What's wrong with following my heart?

IT'S FOOLISH. The world says "Follow your heart!" This is the philosophy of new age gurus, self-help seminars, and romantic pop songs. Because it sounds romantic and noble, it sells millions of records and books. The problem is that following your heart usually means chasing after whatever feels right at the moment whether or not it actually is right. The Bible says "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but he who walks wisely will be delivered." (Proverbs 28:26)

IT'S UNRELIABLE. People forget that feelings and emotions are shallow, fickle, and unreliable. They can fluctuate depending upon the circumstances. What feels right in the height of sweet emotion often feels like a sour mistake a few years later. This selfish philosophy is also the source of countless divorces. It leads many to excuse themselves from their lifelong commitments because they no longer "feel in love."

IT'S CORRUPT. The truth is our hearts are basically selfish and sinful. The Bible says, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) Jesus said, "Out of our heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication's, thefts, false witness, slanders" (Matthew 15:19) Unless our hearts are genuinely changed by God, they will continue to choose wrong things.



Should I ever follow my heart?

King Solomon said "A wise man's heart directs him toward the right, but the foolish man's heart directs him towards the left." (Ecclesiastes 10:2) Just as your heart can direct you toward hatred, lust, and violence, it can also be driven by love, truth, and kindness. As you walk with God, He will put dreams in your heart that He wants to fulfill in your life. He will also put skills and abilities in your heart that He wants to develop for His glory (Exodus 35:30-35) He will give you the desire to give (2 Corinthians 9:7) and to worship (Ephesians 5:19) As you put God first, He will step in and fulfill the good desires of your heart. The Bible says, "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalms 37:4) But the only time you can feel good about following your heart is when you know your heart is intent on serving and pleasing God.

Why is following my heart not enough?

Because our hearts are so subject to change and so utterly untrustworthy, the Scriptures communicate a much stronger message than "follow your heart". The Bible instructs you to lead your heart. This means to take full responsibility for its condition and direction. Realize that you do have control over where you heart is. You have been given the power by God to take your heart off one thing and to set it on something else. The following verses all communicate a message of leading your heart:

- Proverbs 23:17 *Do not let your heart envy sinners.*
- Proverbs 23:19 *Direct your heart in the way.*
- Proverbs 23:26 *Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways.*
- 1 Kings 8:61 *Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the Lord our God.*
- John 14:27 *Do not let your heart be troubled, not let it be afraid.*
- James 4:8 *Purify your hearts.*
- James 5:8 *Strengthen your hearts.*

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Leading Your Heart continued from page 3...

How Do I Lead My Heart?

First, you need to understand that your heart follows your investment. Whatever you pour your time, money, and energy into will draw your heart...

CHECK YOUR HEART. One of the keys to successfully leading your heart is to constantly be aware of where it is. Do you know what has your heart right now? You can tell by looking at where your time has gone in the past month, where your money has gone, and what you keep talking about.

GUARD YOUR HEART. When something unhealthy tempts your heart, it is your responsibility to guard it against temptation. The Bible says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life" (Proverbs 4:23). Don't let your heart put money or your work above God and your neighbor. Don't let your heart lust after the beauty of another person (Proverbs 6:25). The Bible says, "If riches increase, do not set your heart on them" (Psalms 62:10).



"Where your treasure is,
there will your heart be also."
Matthew 6:21

SET YOUR HEART. The Apostle Paul taught, "Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1). It is time to identify where your heart needs to be and then choose to set your heart on those things... You say, "But I don't really want to invest in those things. I'd rather be doing this or that." I know. You've set your heart on that in the past and you are stuck in a "follow your heart" mentality." But you don't have to let your feelings lead you anymore. Lust is when you set your heart on something that is wrong and forbidden. You can choose to take your heart off the wrong things and set it on what is right.

INVEST YOUR HEART. Don't wait until you feel like doing the right thing. Invest in your relationship with God and your neighbor now. Start pouring your time, effort, and livelihood into what matters most. The more you invest, the more your heart will value these relationships. Lead your heart back to where it should be, with God and your neighbor.

Bishops Call for Rally Over Anti-Catholic Bill continued from page 2...

to be heard," said Bishop Lori. "This is a thinly-veiled attempt to silence the Church on important issues of the day - but especially with regard to marriage."

McDonald and Lawler are both outspoken same-sex "marriage" advocates, and have been critical of the Catholic Church's opposition to laws dismantling the legal definition of marriage. Connecticut legalized same-sex "marriage" in October of last year. State Sen. Michael McLachlan of Danbury concurred with Lori's analysis. "The real purpose of this bill is payback to the bishops and pastors of the Roman Catholic Church in Connecticut for opposing gay marriage," he said.

Lawlor and McDonald, however, had backed away from the proposal Monday, calling false the charge that the bill "originated from the two of us as an attack on the church and freedom of religion." "Despite what has been portrayed, we have not endorsed nor are advocating for this proposal," they added.

Attorney Philip A. Lacovara, a constitutional law expert and Bridgeport diocese Catholic, said that he the bill deeply flawed and questioned how the committee could have entertained the idea in the first place.

"I find it utterly astonishing that Bill 1098 could be taken seriously enough to warrant a hearing before your Committee," Lacovara wrote in an open letter to the legislators. "I would find it difficult to use it as a 'hypothetical' in one of my constitutional law classes, because even first year law students would have so little difficulty seeing why the bill goes well beyond the powers that the Constitution allows the States to exercise in dealing with organized churches."

Lacovara, an attorney of 40 years' experience wrote: "I cannot recall a single piece of proposed legislation at any level of government that more patently runs afoul of the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment than does this bill."