

CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF JUNE 24, 2018



SUNDAY, JUNE 24TH

Nativity of the Baptist

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Parish Council Meeting
Coffee Hour / Open Pool

THURSDAY, JUNE 28TH

7:00p.m. Great Vespers w/Litiya

FRIDAY, JUNE 29TH

Holy Apostles Peter & Paul

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 30TH

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

SUNDAY, JULY 1ST

5th Sunday of Pentecost

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

A Warm Welcome!

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

Open Pool

Today, after the Divine Liturgy, the pool will be open for swimming. A certified lifeguard will be on duty, but parents should still watch their children. Notes: 1) Swimming will begin after the food is blessed. 2) Toys, food, and garbage should be cleaned up before leaving for home. Thanks!



Parish Council Meeting – June 24th

Today there will be a short meeting of the council, following the Divine Liturgy. As always, all parishioners are welcome to attend.



Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul - June 29th

The Fast which began on Monday, June 4th concludes on the Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul, Friday, June 29th. Come celebrate the lives of these Holy Apostles, rejoicing as the Church gives thanks to God for their labors and example!

Note: Since the feast of the Apostles falls on a Friday, when we fast in remembrance of the Lord's Crucifixion, we still fast but fish is permitted.

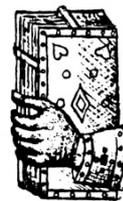
Spiritual Reading

is a great way for Christians to grow in their relationship with God. This is because the more we come to understand our Faith, the better we can live it. What spiritual book are you currently reading? Want a recommendation, ask Fr. John.



Sync your Smartphone

From orthodoxdelmarva.org, you can sync the liturgical calendar to your smart-phone, Google calendar, Outlook, iCalendar, etc.. Check it out!



Bible Studies

are being held on Saturday evenings at 5:00pm in the "Quiet Room", and will conclude just before the Vespers at 6:00pm. This is a great and enjoyable way to learn together about your Faith. Everyone is invited to attend. As always: "Bring a Bible and a friend!"

Vacation Planning

An online directory of Orthodox churches in North America is available at orthodoxyinamerica.org. Everyone needs a vacation sometime, but who really wants or can afford to be without God, even for a day! When visiting another church, it is good practice to let the priest know who you are before visiting.



READER SCHEDULE



Sunday, July 1st

Megan Borodulia

Sunday, July 8th

Rdr. George Kaloroumakis

Haven't Seen Someone in a While?

Give them an email or a call. Let them know that you miss them. Our parish is a family, and families check up on each other.

CASH FLOWS THROUGH 5/31/18					CASH FLOWS IN JUNE 2018					FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	AS OF: 6/24		
Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Available	Restricted	Savings
42,710	46,165	5,630	3,000	-825	7,254	9,233	0	0	-1,979	13,386	5,764	12,000

HOW TO FORM AN ORTHODOX CONSCIENCE

By Hieroschemamonk Ambrose

An Orthodox Christian conscience is created by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ acting within us. It is difficult to form this conscience. But once a Christian acquires it, an alarm is sounded in his heart and mind whenever he comes close to improper actions, lack of charity toward others, false ideas, and deviations from the holy traditions of Orthodoxy.

Here are the ways in which we can cooperate with God's grace and form this conscience within ourselves:

1. We are to have much love for our Saviour, with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. We are not to divide our love between God and the world. For a beginner this means that when we pray we should struggle mightily to concentrate and avoid distractions: we are to be wholly in God. Furthermore, as St. John of Kronstadt teaches:

"Love for God begins to manifest itself, and to act in us, when we begin to love our neighbor as ourselves, and not to spare ourselves or anything belonging to us for him, as he is the image of God: for *he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?* (1 John 4:20)."

St. John says that this is the only love which is real, and lasting:

"The purer the heart becomes, the larger it becomes; consequently it is able to find room for more and more loved ones; the more sinful it is, the more it contracts; consequently it is able to find room for fewer and fewer loved ones—it is limited by a false love; self-love."

2. We must pray often, both at church and at home. St. Gregory of Sinai says that the great gift which God gives us in Holy Baptism is buried by us, just as a treasure is buried in the ground—'and common sense and gratitude demand that we should take good care to unearth this treasure and bring it to light.' One of the most important ways to do this is by acquiring the habit of prayer. Blessed Theophan the Recluse explains further

"Those who only hear about spiritual meditation and prayer and have no direct knowledge [experience] of it are like men blind from birth, who hear about the sunshine without ever knowing what it really is.

Through this ignorance they lose many spiritual blessings, and are slow in arriving at the virtues which make for the fulfillment of God's good pleasure."

3. We must carefully read and study Holy Scripture. Although many saints had the habit of reading through the entire Psalter and New Testament every week, we should at least read the Gospel and Epistle appointed in the Church Calendar for each day. According to St. Seraphim of Sarov, "It is very profitable 'to occupy oneself: with the reading of the word of God in solitude, and to read the whole Bible intelligently...in order that the whole mind of the reader might be plunged into the truths of Holy Scripture, and that from this he might receive warmth."

4. Attendance at Divine Services and frequent reception of Holy Communion is vital to the development of an Orthodox conscience. Of this, St. John of Kronstadt writes:

"The Divine Liturgy is truly a heavenly service on earth, in which God Himself, in a particular, immediate, and most close manner is present and dwells with menThere is on earth nothing higher, greater, more holy, than the Liturgy; nothing more solemn, nothing more life-

giving."

St. Tikhon of Zadonsk observed: "The Christians of old frequently received communion as the cause and food of immortality, wherefore even up to our own time the Holy Church daily exhorts us to 'draw near with fear of God and with faith'. At the present day people have neither, as the facts abundantly prove; only once a year, and even then almost under compulsion, do they approach the Table of Immortality Men hasten joyfully to banquets, but to this spiritual and most Sacred Table to which Christ invites them they come under compulsion."

5. We should read the writings of the Holy Fathers of the Church and the Lives of the Saints. Blessed Theophan the Recluse explained this to one of his spiritual children in the following way:

"The spiritual life is a special world into which the wisdom of men cannot penetrate... This is a subject which embraces much and is lofty and sweet to the heart If you seriously desire to enter onto this path, then you won't have time to turn to the study of other



subjects.. for human philosophizing cannot even be compared with spiritual wisdom."

Therefore, if we wish to learn ways that are pleasing to God, it stands to reason that we will set aside time in order to study the writings and lives of those who have drawn close to Him while still in this life, for according to St. John of Kronstadt there are rich and .poor in the spiritual world just as there are in worldly society:

"As the poor ask charity of the rich, and cannot live without help from them, so also in the spiritual order the poor must have recourse to the rich. We are the spiritually poor, whilst the saints, and those who shine even in this present life by their faith and piety, are the spiritually rich. It is to them that we needy ones must have recourse."

6. We are to practice the presence of God in our daily life. St. John of Kronstadt explains it in this way:

"Believe that God sees you as undoubtedly as you believe that anyone standing face to face with you sees you, only with this difference, that the Heavenly Father sees everything that is in you, everything that you are God is nearer to us than any man at any time. Therefore we must always set God before us, at our right hand, and there behold Him; we must be strong, and in order not to sin we must so place ourselves that nothing can thrust God from our thoughts and hearts, that nothing can hide Him from us, that nothing may deprive us of our beloved Lord, but that we may every hour, every minute, belong to Him, and be perpetually with Him, as He Himself is perpetually with us, as He constantly cares for us and guards us".

7. We should often, if not daily, examine our souls and repent of the sins we find there. St. Mark the Ascetic writes: "The conscience is nature's book. He who applies what he reads there experiences God's help." Thus, Elder Macarius of Optina wrote in a letter of spiritual direction:

"The Lord calls to Him all sinners; He opens His arms wide, even to the worst among them. Gladly He takes them in His arms, if only they will come. But they have got to make the effort of coming. They must seek Him,

go to Him. In other words, they must repent. It is not He that rejects those who do: not repent. He still longs for them, and calls them. But they refuse to hear His call. They choose to wander away, in some other direction." Therefore, St. John of Kronstadt explains: "Conscience in men is nothing else but the voice of the omnipresent God moving in the heart—the Lord knows all Watch your heart throughout your life; examine it, listen to it, and see what prevents it from uniting itself with the Lord. Let this be your supreme and constant study Examine yourself more often; see where the eyes of your heart are looking."

And then, as Blessed Theophan the Recluse counsels:

"Repent, and turn to the Lord, admit your sins, weep for them with heartfelt contrition, and confess them before your spiritual father." St. Hesychios the Priest tells us that according to St. Basil the Great, "a great help towards not sinning and not committing daily the same faults is for us to review in our conscience at the end of each day what we have done wrong and what we have done right. Job did this with regard to both himself and to his children [cf. Job 1:5], These daily reckonings illumine a man's hour-by-hour behaviour."

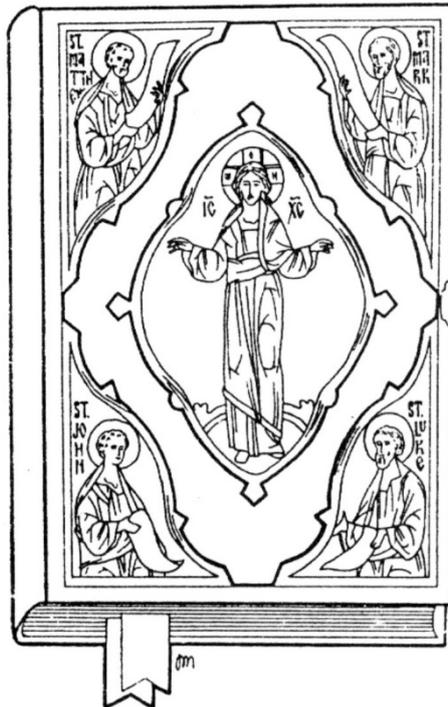
8. Struggle mightily to avoid judging others. God alone has

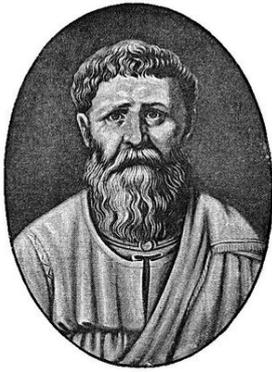
the right to judge, for as St. Tikhon of Zadonsk says:

"Do not judge others, for you cannot know what is inside the other man. Do not condemn, for he may still rise whilst you may fall. Beware of even talking about others, lest you start judging them. Enquiring into other people's sin is a curiosity hateful to God and man...because, by judging, man usurps the powers of the only judge, Christ Above all, when judging another we cannot know whether perchance he has not already repented and been forgiven by God."

If we are willing to arrange our lives in the above manner, resolving not to withdraw from this holy labor even if it means suffering and also death, then, from the very moment that we begin, grace starts to flow into us, according to Blessed Theophan the Recluse:

"The help of God is always ready and always near, but is only given to those who seek and work."





WHAT IS POSSIBLE WITH GOD'S GUIDANCE AND MAN'S GOODWILL

From the Writings of St. Augustine of Hippo

From the experience of his passionate youth, Blessed Augustine recognized the need for the soul to free itself from the enticements of the world before it could hope to grasp the things of the spirit. Much of his writing is devoted to exhorting his readers not to be conformed to the ways of the world: "With God's guidance a man of good will can turn the troubles of this present life to the advantage of courage. Among abounding pleasures and temporal prosperity, he may prove and strengthen temperance. In temptations he may sharpen his prudence that he may not only be led into them, but may also become more vigilant and more eager in his love of truth which alone never deceives".

GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

The Orthodox Church offers certain guidelines for the faithful to prepare themselves for the joyous partaking of Holy Communion. These are:

- 1) Attendance at church services the night before Liturgy. If not possible, then one should keep the evening in prayer, study and/or charity.
- 2) Observance of the fasting days and seasons of the Church.
- 3) A recent confession of sins and absolution from a priest.
- 4) Fasting from food and drink (including water), and smoking from midnight on the day which Holy Communion is to be received. **NOTE:** Do not fast from medications, or food or drink recommended by a doctor.
- 5) Abstinance from sexual relations the night before Liturgy and on the day of receiving Holy Communion.
- 6) Reading of the appointed prayers before and after receiving Holy Communion. These are found in one's prayer book or Liturgy book.
- 7) Being at peace, or at least seeking peace, with one's neighbor.



Questions or special circumstances? Please speak with your priest.

THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE FORERUNNER & BAPTIST

Celebrated June 24th

The Gospel (Luke. 1: 5) relates that the righteous parents of St John the Baptist, the Priest Zachariah and Elizabeth (September 5), lived in the ancient city of Hebron. They reached old age without having children, since Elizabeth was barren. Once, St Zachariah was serving in the Temple at Jerusalem and saw the Archangel Gabriel, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. He predicted that St Zachariah would father a son, who would announce the Savior, the Messiah, awaited by the Old Testament Church. Zachariah was troubled, and fear fell upon him. He had doubts that in old age it was possible to have a son, and he asked for a sign. It was given to him, and it was also a chastisement for his unbelief. Zachariah was struck speechless until the time of the fulfillment of the archangel's words.



St Elizabeth came to be with child, and fearing derision at being pregnant so late in life, she kept it secret for five months. Then her relative, the Virgin Mary, came to share with her her own joy. Elizabeth, "filled with the Holy Spirit," was the first to greet the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God. St John leaped in his mother's womb at the visit of the Most Holy Virgin Mary and the Son of God incarnate within Her.

Soon St Elizabeth gave birth to a son, and all the relatives and acquaintances rejoiced together with her. On the eighth day, in accordance with the Law of Moses, he was circumcised and was called John. Everyone was amazed, since no one in the family had this name. When they asked St Zachariah about this, he motioned for a tablet and wrote on it: "His name is John." Immediately his tongue was loosed, and St Zachariah glorified God. He prophesied about the Coming into the world of the Messiah, and of his own son John, Forerunner of the Lord (Lk. 1: 68-79).

After the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ and the worship of the shepherds and the Magi, wicked king Herod gave orders to kill all male infants. Hearing about this, St Elizabeth fled into the wilderness and hid in a cave. St Zachariah was at Jerusalem and was doing his priestly service in the Temple. Herod sent soldiers to him to find out the abode of the infant John and his mother. Zachariah answered that their whereabouts were unknown to him, and he was killed right there in the Temple. Righteous Elizabeth continued to live in the wilderness with her son and she died there. The child John, protected by an angel, dwelt in the wilderness until the time when he came preaching repentance, and was accounted worthy to baptize the Lord.