

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF JULY 07, 2019

SUNDAY/JULY 7

3rd Sunday After Pentecost

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy;

Coffee Hour

Food Basket Sunday

TUESDAY/JULY 9

6:30p.m. Memorial Service for

Atopere Filippini (+2011)

7-8:00p.m. Lemonade & Conversations

in St. George Gazebo

THURSDAY/JULY 11

7:00p.m. Vespers

FRIDAY/JULY 12

Icon "of the Three Hands"

St. Paisios of Athos (+1993)

7:40a.m. Hours; 8:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

7:00p.m. Compline with Akathist to

St. Paisios of Athos

SATURDAY/JULY 13

9:30a.m. Akathist to our Lord; Confessions

10-12:00p.m. Wax Spot Cleaning Church Floor

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/JULY 14

4th Sunday After Pentecost

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour



In 717, the Byzantine Emperor Leo the Isaurian began persecution of icon veneration. St. John of Damascus zealously defended the veneration of icons by his sermon and by theological treatises written in defence of the Orthodox viewpoint concerning holy images. Venerable John was slandered by Leo the Isaurian by false information sent to the Governor in Damascus through the emperor's informers. John had been a counselor for the Damascus ruler, considered an important and confidential position. The ruler was angered and ordered that St. John's right hand be cut off. John of Damascus turned in prayer to the Mother of God and in tears interceded Her help at the Icon. The Venerable One received a miraculous healing as the severed hand grew back together. After the miracle, John left Damascus and took the monastic tonsure at the Laura of Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified (†532, commemorated 5 December) and gave the Icon to the monastery. In gratitude for the miracle which happened to him, Venerable John of Damascus had a hand made of silver and as a gift attached it to the Icon — some sources claim that John simply "wrote" (painted) the third hand on the Icon. It is from this event that the Icon received its name "Three-handed."

Offerings Week of July 7

Relics candle: in honor of St. John of San Francisco; in memory of Michael, Melania, Justina, Rosalie, Anastasia and Ivanna; in memory of Nicholas, Eleanore, Ann Marie, John and Jerome.

Olive Oil: for the health of Vera and in memory of Jan; for the health of Katka (birthday); in memory of Gheorghe, Gabriela, Floarea, Elena, Petre-Grigore, Aurelia, Ilie, Alexandru, Sasinca, Maria, Mihail, Anicuta and their families.

Wine: for the health of Nichole & Zachary; for safe travel for Zachary.

Flowers: _ in honor of the Holy Theotokos, our Great Protectress; for health of Larissa (birthday) for health of Mark & Barbara (anniversary).

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

July 09, 1971 Kuzma Savich
July 09, 2010 Tatiana Onuschak
July 09, 2011 Atopere Filippini
July 10, 1951 Vassily Fetchina
July 11, 1928 Elias Chromoho
July 12, 1978 Antonia Salamander
July 12, 1979 Chariton Perogeff
July 13, 1975 John Kachorsky
July 14, 2015 Charles Specian Jr.

Coffee Hour Schedule

July 14 Sokol, Nasledysheva, Staina & Sarchisian
July 21 Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu, Vajda & Sue

Counters Schedule

July 14 Ciprian C. & Jill P.
July 21 Irina S. & Lisa K.

Ushers Schedule

July 14 Jerome S. & Adrian M.
July 21 Dennis F. & Robert E.

Reader's Schedule

July 14 Zachary S. / July 21 Ciprian C.

Names Day Greetings

St. Olga/July 11: Donna Shafer & Pauline
Olga Nasledysheva - Many Blessed Years!

Vacation Planning – Making A List

- Location of Orthodox Church to attend on the Sunday(s) I will be away.
- Give some thought to visiting Orthodox Churches or Monasteries on your vacation, they may be on the way to where you are vacationing.
- If you are prepared to receive Holy Communion in a church you are visiting, you must communicate with the priest of that church before the Sunday you will be there. It is improper to just come up to the chalice, without the priest knowing in advance, who you are, what parish you belong to and when did you last go to Confession.
- On vacations, God is still with us; we should be sure we are still with Him; as exemplified in our conduct, speech and sense of purpose.
- Pack an icon, prayer book, bible.
- Fasting days and the Dormition Lent (Aug. 1-14) are observed, even on vacation. Plan accordingly.
- Have your parish offering envelope given in advance for the Sunday(s) you will not be here.
- If you have a particular parish ministry – ushers, counter, coffee hour etc., please arrange to have someone cover for you.
- Ask for a Prayer for Travelers at the end of Sunday Divine Liturgy.

Tuesdays of July – Lemonade & Informal Conversations 7-8:00p.m.

These evenings are an opportunity for informal conversations about various topics and subjects you may wish to discuss. We meet in the gazebo (depending on number of people and weather) or in the rectory. We end sharply at 8:00p.m. Bring no food or drink. Lemonade or other is provided. All are welcome.

Wax Spot Removal Church Floor – Saturday, July 13th 10a.m. to 12:00p.m.

Parish Council Meeting – July 18th

Keeping up your Daily Prayer Life

Source: Fr. Bill's Blog <<https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/frbill/90-keeping-up-your-daily-prayer-life/>>

FR. BILL OLNHAUSEN <http://www.pravmir.com/author/user_1306711345/> | 04 NOVEMBER 2018

Why is it so hard to pray?

I had decided that each evening during Lent I would spend 15 minutes in church saying the Jesus Prayer. Instead there I stood outside the church door reorganizing the bulletin board which didn't need it, or walking over to my office to straighten up my desk which didn't need it – well, no more than usual. Or I'd check how the climbing vine in the narthex was doing. *Anything* but go into church and pray. Then I would hurry in at the last minute and vest for the evening service. Why was I not praying?

I knew how often Jesus withdrew for prayer. If he needed it, did I think I didn't? I knew how prayer kept me united with God, "plugged in" so that my spiritual batteries wouldn't run down. I knew prayer gives us strength and perspective to cope with life, makes things go more smoothly. Did I think I didn't have time? I had taught that "prayer doesn't take time, prayer makes time" – keeps us more focused on what's important, less inclined to waste time on trivia. And there I had just spent 15 minutes of prayer time doing nothing. Why was I not praying?

Finally I realized what was going on: Someone was trying to keep me from praying. This is Satan's most devious, pernicious work. I discovered what to say when he came at me: "Satan, go to hell." After that I usually made it into church. Not always. It's a never-ending struggle, and sometimes I lost.



What follows here are some other things I've learned over the years about the prayer life. You can find this advice in any good book about prayer, so if you already know it and practice it, feel free to tune out now.

Have I always taken my good advice? No. I've got better in old age, probably out of fear. I worry I'll drop dead and arrive at the gates of Heaven and hear, "What?! You didn't even say your prayers yesterday?"

The Divine Liturgy

If you want to keep your daily prayers on track, start somewhere else – with the Liturgy. This is the center of Orthodox worship and prayer, its pattern and its inspiration, which then flows out into the week. If for good cause (and it had better be really good, like your car breaks down or something) you cannot get to Sunday Liturgy, come to Saturday evening Vespers, or weekday services if your church offers them. Here at Saint Nicholas we have regular Monday and Wednesday Orthros/Matins, plus saints' days and Lenten services. Let your personal prayer life be shaped and guided by the Church's public prayers.

Set up a Plan for your Daily Prayers

Western Christians often call this a "Rule of Prayer". We Orthodox need one, too. I suspect too many of us pray only when the "spirit" moves us. That's a good way for our daily prayer life to just sort of dribble away. We need regular disciplined prayer. Here are some basic elements to help you set up your plan.

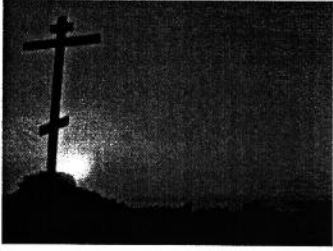
When to Pray

Set *fixed times* for prayer, from which you vary only if you must. Otherwise you'll probably not get around to it.

Morning and evening (early or before you go to bed) are the best times. Christians and Jews before us have always felt the need to consecrate sunrise and sunset – which is why our chief daily services are Vespers for sunset and Matins/Orthros for dawn – in that order, because of Genesis 1: "There was evening and morning, the first day".

I am a morning person so, when we don't have morning services at church, I do my major praying right after I get out of bed – well, first I get a cup of coffee so my brain will function. If I don't pray immediately, I often get distracted and don't get back to it.

I trust we all give thanks at meals. If you can do more prayers with your family, that's good. But don't pressure them into it or make them feel uncomfortable. That's not good praying. I must tell you this story: A young mother from Saint Nicholas was doing morning prayers with her pre-



school children, and her sister-in-law overheard “Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, have mercy on us. Holy God, holy Mighty, Luke, stop hitting your sister! holy Immortal, have mercy on us...”

Pray anytime you can. “Walk with God”, like Enoch. *Genesis 5:22,24*

Where and How to Pray

Anywhere! If you have a few minutes at work pray there – but do not make a show of it. Christ tells us when we pray to “go into your closet”, so we “won’t be seen by men”. *Matthew 6:5-6* When you can, pray the Jesus Prayer. Before you drive, say a quick prayer for safety and make the sign of the cross. Pray as you

drive if it doesn't take your mind off the road! In the old days before churches were locked during the day, it was great to drop in there to pray. Sadly, no more. At home is the best place. The proper Orthodox home has an icon corner where we can focus our praying. Some use candles and incense there.

The books all say the best posture for prayer is standing, to honor God. (This also has the advantage that if we go to sleep while praying we fall over!) However, in my old age I can now concentrate better while sitting, and I found I was letting the “perfect” get in the way of the “good”. So in the morning I now sit in my chair facing our icons. Or sometimes I sit across the room facing a painting of railroad tracks disappearing into the morning mist. And I think of the angels coming before too long in an old steam train (I’m a railroad fan) and taking me off through the mists into the Kingdom. (This is crazy theology. I don’t mean it literally. But it helps somehow – and who knows?)



At night I pray from my chair and/or in bed. Nor is this ideal, but I trust God understands. If we drift off while praying, what better way to fall asleep at night?

Regarding “technique”: Some Orthodox use a prayer rope to say the Jesus Prayer, wearing it on their wrist to keep it handy. This may be right for you; I don’t find it helpful for myself. The Jesus Prayer is the typical Orthodox way of meditating: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”, repeated slowly over and over. Some coordinate it with their breathing: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God” in, “have mercy on me, a sinner” out. I have found this difficult, too, I think because my mind wanders easily. I wish it didn’t. But try it. It



may be just right for you.

However, for 35 years swimming at the Y, I have given the first 6 laps to “Holy God...”, the second set to the Jesus Prayer, and so on. (Penitent: “Father, may I eat while I’m praying?” Priest: “No, my son, but you may pray while you’re eating.”) Unusual, but it works for me, and it’s a half hour spent with God. Once someone asked about my prayer life, and I blurted out “It’s like I’m floating”, then wondered why I said that. Finally I realized...!

So experiment and find how you pray best.

How Much to Pray

If you have not been praying regularly *start small*, or you will soon be tempted to give up. Then add more prayers and prayer time as seems natural.

Adjust your praying time to your situation. Take 2 extremes: If you are retired like me, you should pray a lot. On the other hand, if you are a young mother whose infant is teething day and night, it’s sufficient to occasionally say, “Help, Lord” – or perhaps the “Jesus Prayer” while nursing? Offer a quick prayer to the Theotokos. She will understand. You think the infant Jesus didn’t teethe?

Here is excellent advice from Saint Theophan the Recluse: “Do not concern yourself with the number of prayers read, but only lift your heart and mind to the Lord in prayer, and continue in a worthy manner for the time set aside. A few prayers, correctly read, are better than many prayers read through...”- from *The Ancient Faith Prayer Book*.



What to Pray

Unlike the daily Offices in Western Christianity which are fixed and fairly simple, Orthodox Matins and Vespers are too complicated for personal use – unless you want to buy over 15 books! Orthodox prayer books provide a simple basic, though very flexible, pattern for daily prayers, and some contain the less complicated Lesser Hours of the day.

Fixed prayer forms teach us how to pray. For example, we learn that we should usually begin praying not with “me”, but with praising and thanking God. (“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...”) Some people use a few fixed prayers, then spend the rest of the time using their own words, or with the Jesus Prayer, or even just keeping silence before God. Others (and I mean me) quickly find our minds wandering during meditative prayer, and we need more fixed forms to keep us on the divine Subject.

Certainly we should offer intercessory prayers for those we love, living and departed, and any who have requested our prayers. I write down the names, so I don’t omit anyone or waste time trying to remember who I just forgot. What should you ask for them? If they have particular needs, be specific – all in the context of “thy will be done”. But usually I pray simply “Lord have mercy on [N.]”. God knows their needs better than I do.

Here again, work out your own system. In my case, over the years certain saints have reached out to me (like 20 of them so far!), so each night I ask each of them “Holy [N.] pray for me [or us]”. I badger Saint Nicholas for parish needs, Saint Nektarios for myself or my family, and Saint Phanourios when I’ve lost something.

If your prayer format ever becomes routine and you’re mostly just rattling off words, vary your system or change prayer books. As with anyone we love, what’s most important is not so much what we say or don’t say, but simply that we regularly spend time with that person – or Person.

What should we expect to get out of prayer?

Nothing! Almost certainly you *will* get something out of it, as I said at the beginning. But God is an End in himself. The purpose of prayer is to be with him. Never come to God (or anybody for the matter) with the attitude, “What are you going to give me?” If you really feel prayer is doing nothing for you, *keep praying*. C.S.Lewis wrote that all our prayer here is practice, sort of like learning multiplication tables in school, so that when we graduate and move out into the Big Wide World, we’ll know how to do it.

And never forget: Satan does not want you to pray. So *keep praying*.



DIVINE AND MEDICAL AID

A Counsel of the Elder Epiphanius of Athens (+1989)

“When we have a certain problem with our health, is it sufficient for us to call upon divine aid or can we take refuge in medical science as well?”

To this the Elder replied: “God accepts both. Give the physician his place, for the Lord created him, let him not leave you, for there is need of him. There is a time when success lies in the hands of physicians, for they too will pray to the Lord that he should grant them success in diagnosis and in healing, for the sake of preserving life... healing is from the Highest... the Lord created medicines from the earth, a wise man does not reject them.”

“Taking the benefits offered by medical science does not preclude calling upon divine help. That is, the Christians, without rejecting medical aid, must pray that God enlighten the doctors to make the correct diagnosis, to proceed to the necessary tests and to determine the appropriate therapy. They should ask God to enlighten them to cooperate with the doctor, to strengthen them in patience so that they come out gaining profit of soul from their trial, and if it is His will and for the advantage of their soul, to deliver them from sickness.”



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DENY ONESELF?

To deny oneself means to give up one’s bad habits; to root out of the heart all that ties us to the world; not to cherish bad thoughts or desires; to suppress every evil thought; not to desire to do anything out of self love, but to do everything out of love for God.

~ St. Innocent of Alaska

WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN JUST A FEW MOMENTS?

A few moments of fervent repentance, and you will be cleansed by the Holy Spirit from every impurity; you will be whiter than snow, and tears, purifying the heart will flow from your eyes; you will be covered with the garment of Christ’s righteousness and united to Him, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

~ St. John of Kronstadt





THE JESUS PRAYER AND THE 3 POWERS OF THE SOUL

Adapted from Metropolitan Hierotheos

Man according to Scripture, has been created "after the image of God" (Col. 3:10). God is Trinity, that is, one essence in three Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Thus the soul, being created in the image of God, is single as well as manifold.

The soul has three parts that must be united and turned toward God. The three parts or powers of the soul are the power to know, the power to love, and the power to will. According to the Fathers, the soul was created 1) to know God, 2) to love God, and 3) to do the will of God.

In this way the commandment is fulfilled: "and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mt. 12:30). When the mind remains in God through prayer and contemplation, it kindles within the soul a strong desire and love for God, which in turn strengthens man's will to keep the Commandments. In this way the soul is itself united, and is joined to God.

However, when the mind comes to ignore God, then the soul begins to desire and love created things instead of the Creator, and the will of man becomes subject to the tyranny of the passions. In this way the soul becomes first disunited and then eventually separated from God.

Through sin, the three powers of the soul go away from God and lose unity with one another. One part of the soul, usually the mind, may want to return to God, but the other parts may not wish to. This is the state of most Christians.

Nevertheless, the unity of the soul can still be restored through the Jesus Prayer. The return to God starts with the concentration of the mind. Our aim is to detach the mind from its attraction to the surrounding objects and bring it back to God.

Since the mind has the property of increasing love and desire for that which it is concentrated on, concentration on the Name of God leads to love from Him. However, in the same way, concentration on the things of the flesh or the world lead to love from them.

Therefore, let each man attend to his thoughts, for they will lead either to his unification with God or to his spiritual fragmentation – to eternal life or to eternal torment.



GUARDING THE MIND AND THE HEART

Saint Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain

Everyone finds calm and rest at their center. As snails find rest within their crusty shell, as octopus in their chambers, as four-footed land animals in their dens, and as birds in their nests, so also with man, whose mind has the natural attribute to be calm, to find rest and to be in peace when it enters the heart and the inner man. Man too has the body as a region and dwelling, and the heart as its own center and room for resting. St. Isaac called the heart "the house of understanding." And as the animals when troubled and frightened run to their dens to be protected, so also the mind of man, when troubled by some assault of evil thoughts or some other internal or external circumstance, runs to the heart and shouts, "My Jesus help me! My Jesus save me!" and is thus liberated. St. John Climacus said: "The name of Jesus chastises enemies" and "Let the memory of Jesus be united with your breathing and then you will know the benefit of silence." The Apostle Peter preached: "And there is salvation in no one else [except Jesus], for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). This is why St. Macarios also noted: "For as it is not possible for the eye to see without light and for speech to be made without a tongue, or for hearing to take place without an ear, so also it is not possible without Christ to be saved and to enter the kingdom of heaven."

