

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Saint Athanasius -- July 5th



July 5, 2015

6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 5

OUR VENERABLE FATHER ATHANASIOS OF ATHOS

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 6 – JULY 12

SUNDAY, JULY 12 – 7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; THE HOLY MARTYRS PROCLUS AND HILARION; OUR VENERABLE FATHER MICHAEL OF MALEINUS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

*If you are reading the bulletin during the Liturgy (including the homily), please **stop** and be attentive – будьмо уважні!*

July Birthdays

- Bill Loznycky – July 1
- Rabah Tooma – July 2
- Robbie Dukes – July 5
- Michael Boyko – July 10
- Martha Bachynsky – July 15
- Natalia Loznycky – July 18
- Volodymyr Fedunyak – July 22
- Marguerite Hartman – July 29
- Joseph Hirniak – July 29

*Many blessed years!
Многая і благая літа!*

Please Note:

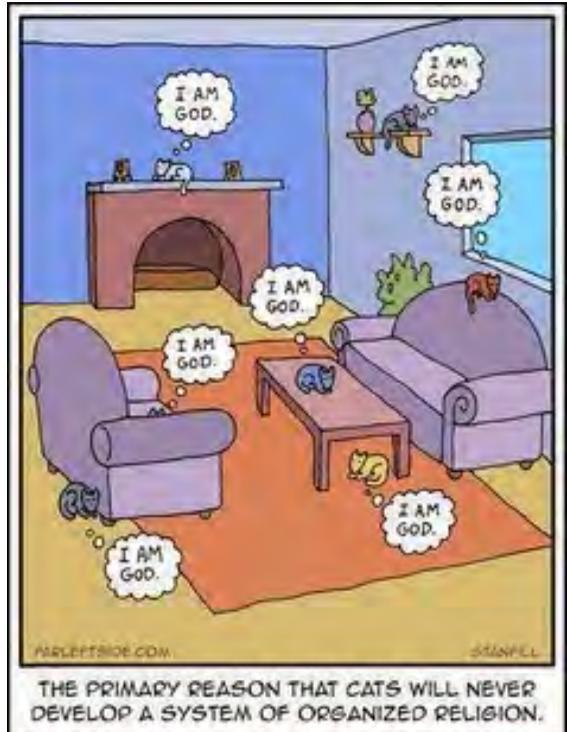
When you are away, please don't forget that the church still relies on your contributions. Our bills do not go on vacation. Your absence on any Sunday does not negate your obligation to support your home parish.

If You Are Hospitalized

please be sure to let your priest know. Even if you do not want a visit, prayers (private and/or communal) should be offered on your behalf. Your priest is not clairvoyant and will not know that you are in the hospital unless you tell him. When you check into the hospital, be sure to put yourself in the hands of the Divine Physician as well as an earthly one!

Refinancing of the Church

As discussed at the parish meeting last week, the process of refinancing the church is underway. A very important aspect of the application is demonstrating to the lender that the parish community have committed adequate financial support. **Please fill out your pledge form as soon as possible.**



Community

The communal nature of our faith is essential

Christianity is a communal faith, one that requires its followers to be actively involved with others. The Church's worship is communal, and salvation itself is a corporate act, one that necessitates interaction with others. One is not "saved" in a vacuum, but as part of the corporal life of the Church. Your salvation must be as much a concern to me, as is my own salvation. My relationship with Christ is not about me, but about us.

Our sins are not just against God, but against the Body of Christ, the Church. Our love of God can not be salvific if we do not love others, for just as the Lord said, "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? (1 John 4:20)".

Given the communal nature of the Church, it is particularly alarming to see increasing numbers of people isolating themselves from others. Many have turned to the Internet as the sole source of interaction with others, finding "friendships" with people who will never be met in person. The importance of social interaction in the central square, as seen in traditional villages where the cafe life and church were the primary source of fraternal interaction, has almost disappeared, pointing the way to a future of estrangement from each other.

Isolated from others, the communal nature that is an important element in what it means to be human, is lost. It is thus imperative that we guard against the temptation of spending too much time in front of the computer, and too little time with others. The sight of young people sitting in coffee houses, together, yet apart, is troubling. Mobile phones, text messaging, iPods, communication through email, and countless hours on facebook, leads to the furtherance of an isolation that is murdering the soul.

As humans, we are meant to be together, for it is in our lives together that we grow in mind and spirit. It is in community that we learn to love God. For friendships to be limited to on-line chat rooms is a tragedy of major proportions, one that will ultimately be the ruin of society.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

The church is an enclosure, if you are within, the wolf cannot enter, but if you stray outside, the wild beasts will get you... Do not wander from the Church; there is nothing more impregnable than the Church. She is your hope and your salvation. She is higher than the heavens, firmer than rock, wider than the world; she never grows old, but is forever renewing her youth.

– St. John Chrysostom

The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence is at the same time a Declaration of Dependence, for it states that our rights have come to us from God, and therefore are "unalienable." If our rights come to us from God, as rays come from the sun, does it not follow that only on condition that we preserve our dependence on God will we preserve our independence from tyranny?

Archbishop Fulton Sheen
The Christian Order and Education

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.”

The Swamp of Subjective Sentimentality

by Believing and Belonging, patheos.com

The sweet way seems to be all goodness and happiness, light and peace. It is full of “Awww!” emotions just being kind and good and nice and tolerant to everyone.

The second way it surfaces is sour. Someone disagrees with the subjective sentimentalist and they condemn them. They scapegoat them. They hand them over and hang them out to dry. This sour subjective sentimentalism can be expressed by conservatives who have made their conservative moral choices without any agreed authority or by liberals who do the same. Both condemn the other side, blame the other side and hate the other side because both kinds can only respond with raw emotion—never with a sound argument, reason or logic.

Therefore, in the present debate over same sex marriage Americans simply cannot comprehend that Catholics operate according to a different set of systems. We believe that same sex activities and same sex marriage are wrong, not primarily because we think such things are “yucky” and not because we “hate gays” or because we want to tell them they are all going to hell.

We believe these things are wrong for clear and articulate reasons. We believe they are wrong for reasons that we can explain and outline clearly. Furthermore, we can believe they are wrong while still accepting gay people, not judging them and allowing them into our lives. We can believe they are wrong while also acknowledging that gay people have many gifts, are capable of great human achievement, human love and many other good things.

The subjective sentimentalist cannot work this out and will not believe it is possible.

He thinks were are pulling a fast one. He thinks we are lying because to disapprove of an action or lifestyle, for him, is to disapprove of the person and to condemn them.

The underlying problem and impasse is one, therefore, which has its roots in an essential philosophical problem.

How this has roots in the Protestant Revolution and the so called Enlightenment I’ll leave it to you to work out....

...or maybe write another post tomorrow.

A Note on Kneeling

Now that Pentecost has past, kneeling is no longer forbidden for weekday Liturgical Services. Kneeling is reintroduced into the **weekday** Liturgical services with the Kneeling Prayers (which technically are part of Vespers for Monday.) Kneeling is **still prohibited for all Sundays**. "Because kneeling is a sign of penance in the Eastern tradition, the faithful should be discouraged from kneeling during the Paschal Season and on **all** Sundays of the year. The faithful should be properly instructed as to the reasons why kneeling at these times is not congruent with the theology of the Eastern Churches." (Art. 464 § 1 - *Pastoral Guide of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USA.*)

Sunday offering for June 28

Amount	Number
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	2
\$25.00	1
\$40.00	3
\$50.00	3
\$75.00	2
\$100.00	2
\$125.00	1
\$200.00	1
<hr/>	
\$1070.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1070.00

Average / parish household (42): \$13.05

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: (\$1130.00)

Year-to-date deficit: \$26410.00

Please Note:

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Roof Campaign



The hall roof is in dire need of repair. There are at least six separate leaks. Numerous patch jobs have failed to solve the problems. The current drought has minimized the problem but we continue to pray for rain anyway. There is good news and bad news: The good news is - we have the money; the bad news is - it's still in your pockets. We will be soliciting quotes for repairs soon. Know a roofer you would recommend?

Roof Repair Challenge

An anonymous donor has given \$1000.00 towards the repair of the hall roof. The donor has challenged the rest of the parish to contribute to this cause so that the roof can be fully repaired rather than patched.

Roof Challenge Response: \$2790.00
Total: \$3790.00

Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

Pastoral Council:

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Jeanine Soucie: (718) 674-4529

Social Committee Chairperson:

Megan Hartman (619) 540-4291

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Knianicky: (619) 303-9698



Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church

4400 Palm Avenue
La Mesa, CA 91941
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

Pastor: Fr. James Bankston
frjames@mac.com
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

A Morning Prayer

Now we bless you, my Christ,
Word of God,
light of light who has no beginning,
steward of the Spirit,
and of that threefold light
that gathers in one glory.
You it is who set loose darkness,
you who brought forth light
that you might create all things in light.
You make fast wandering matter
forming it into a world
and the good order we now have.
You enlightened the mind of man
with reason and with wisdom
and so placed an icon here below
of the brightness that is above
that man may see the light by light

and so become entirely light.
You lit up the heavens with lights
of many hues.
You decreed that night and day
should gently yield to one another
honoring your law of brotherhood
and sisterly love.
In night you give respite from the cares
of our burdened flesh.
In day you raise us up to work
and to deeds that are pleasing to you,
that fleeing from the darkness
we might hasten into day,
that day you free from all gloom of night.

St. Gregory the Theologian

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.ecpubs.com