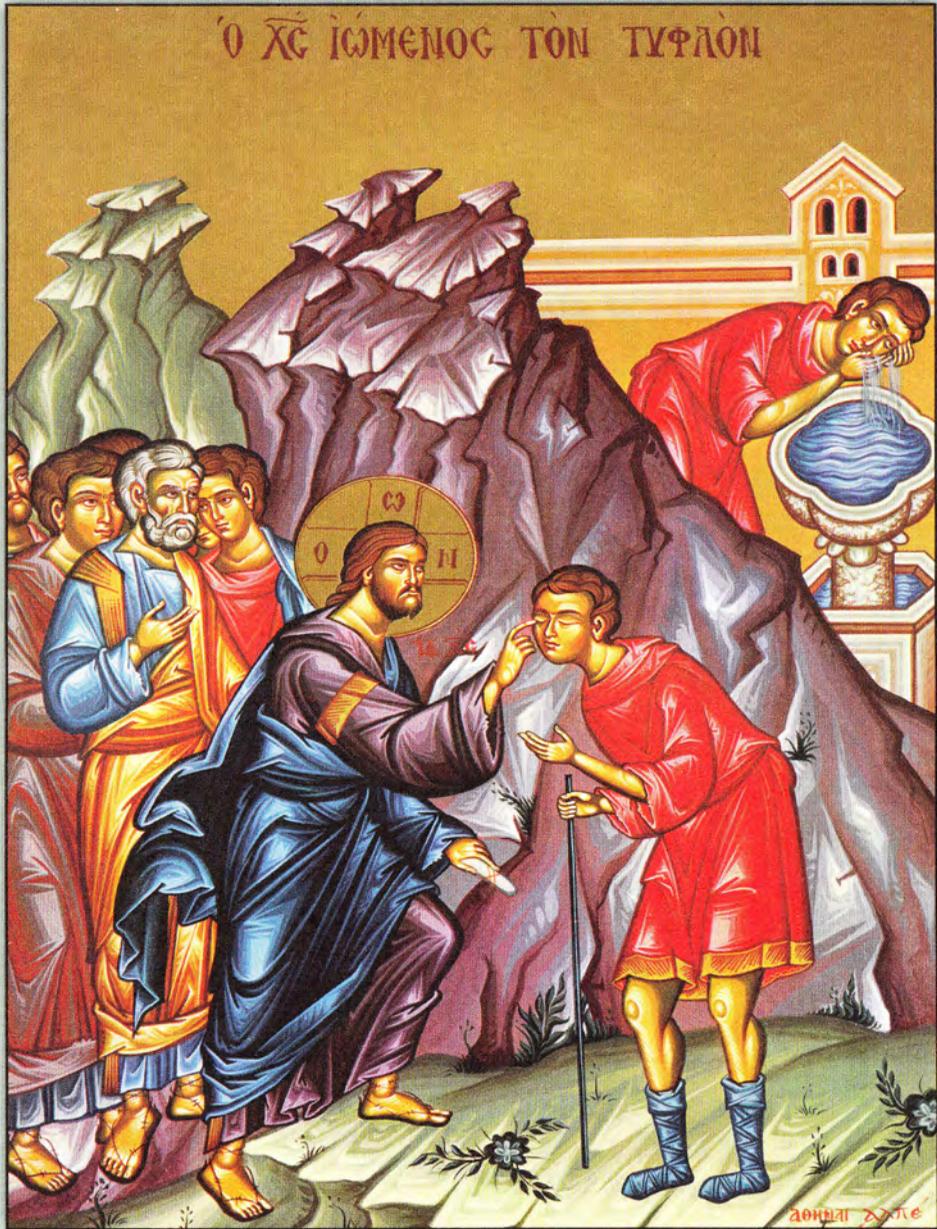


SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND



Icon of Christ and the Man Born Blind



May 1, 2016

SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA – SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

*THE HOLY PROPHET JEREMIAH; CORONATION OF POCHAVI ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD (1773);
PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE (1951) OF BLESSED KLYMENTII (CLEMENT) SHEPTYTSKY, ARCHIMANDRITE
OF THE STUDITES AND CONFESSOR*

**ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!
ВОИСТИНУ ВОСКРЕС!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
TRULY HE IS RISEN!**

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 2 – MAY 8

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

6:00 PM – Great Vespers with Lytia (satisfies obligation for Ascension)

THURSDAY, MAY 5 – ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

SATURDAY, MAY 7

Please Note: No Vespers

SUNDAY, MAY 8 – *SEVENTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA - SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL;
THE HOLY AND ALL-PRAISEWORTHY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST JOHN THE THEOLOGIAN*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

WHY DOES THE PRIEST CENSE US?

During the services, the priest censes many things in church. He also censes the people. Why does he cense the people? As clouds of smoke from the burning incense rise up, we are reminded that we were created in the “image and likeness of God.” It is this image in us that the priest censes. Just as he censes the icons of the saints, he censes each of us.

We are called to be saints. When we turn to God and tell Him we are sorry for our sins, He visits us and blesses us. He encourages us to grow and become more like Himself who is both holy and good. When the priest censes us, he reminds us to keep the divine image in us pure and God-like.

DID YOU KNOW?

❖ 1/6 of all of the words of Jesus Christ are concerned with the relationship of a person and his material possessions.

❖ 1/3 of Christ’s parables are devoted to man’s preoccupation with money.

May Birthdays

- Ihor Ivasyk – May 4
- Luke Haywas – May 4
- Patriarch Svaitoslav – May 5
- Bohdan Kniahynyckyj – May 10
- Iryna Ivasyk – May 18
- Olga Fedunyak – May 21
- Fr. James – May 22



You say grace before meals.
All right.

But I say grace before the play and the opera; And grace before the concert and the pantomime; And grace before I open a book; And grace before sketching, painting, swimming, fencing, boxing, walking, playing, dancing;
And grace before I dip the pen in the ink.

– G.K. Chesterton

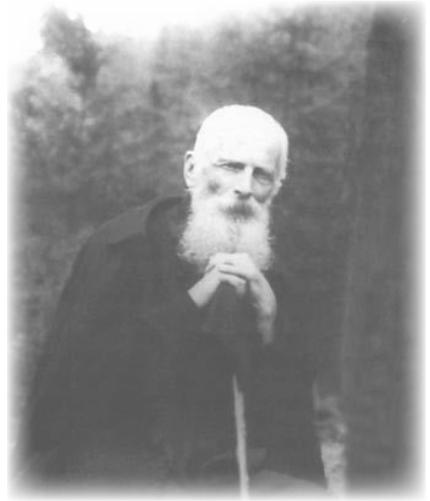
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“The thing about quotes from the internet is that it’s hard to verify their authenticity.”

– Abraham Lincoln

Aristocrat of the spirit

Priest and Martyr **Archimandrite Klymentiy (Sheptytsky)**, the younger brother of the Servant of God Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, was born on 17 November 1869 in the village of Prylbychi, Yavoriv region. He studied law in Munich and Paris and received a doctorate at the University of Krakow. He was a legate of the Austrian Parliament and member of the National Council. In 1912 he entered the Studite monastery as a late vocation; by so doing he renounced his successful secular career. He completed his theological studies in Innsbruck. On 28 August 1915 he was ordained to the priesthood. For many years he was the hegumen (prior) of the Studite monastery at Univ, and in 1944 he became the archimandrite (abbot).

During World War II, he gave refuge to persecuted Jews. On 5 June 1947, he was arrested and sentenced to eight years imprisonment by a special meeting of the NKVD (KGB) in Kyiv.



He died a martyr for the faith on 1 May 1951 in a harsh prison in Vladimir, Russia.

“Tall, 180-185 centimeters, rather thin, with a long white beard, a little stooped, with a cane. Arms relaxed, calm, face and eyes friendly. He reminded me of Saint Nicholas ... We never expected such a rascal in our room ... Some sisters had passed three apples to him, real rosy red and ripe. And he gave one apple to Roman Novosad, who often had stomach problems. He said: ‘You need to take care of your stomach,’ and the others he divided among us.” – From the memories of Ivan Kryvytskyi



ON CHURCH GROWTH

The Church is not simply a building or edifice, nor is it an organization or institutional structure. It is essentially a community of people who are supposed to be of God and imbued with His Spirit. In the words of St. John Chrysostom, “The Church is a community made up of the souls of us men and cannot be built by stone and mortar, but must be built by the spiritual growth of its members into the full reality of Jesus Christ.” This is what Church growth is all about and how we must understand it.

MANY HATS, ONE PERSON: SIN AND ANXIETY

By Douglas Cramer

There's a phrase I like that sums up our life in the modern world: "We all wear many hats." It's true – we do. Time management gurus like Steven Covey encourage us to structure our schedules according to the different roles we play, the different hats we wear – spouse, parent, child, worker, householder, friend, athlete, volunteer. But here's what's great about the phrase "many hats" – if we think about it, it reminds us that even though we wear many hats, there's one person, the same person, underneath each of them.

You know what's wrong about focusing on our hats instead of the person underneath? It can lead us to fall in to a dangerous sin – the sin of anxiety. You may not think of anxiety as a sin. But Jesus Christ teaches us that anxiety leads us away from Him, and from our salvation. And whatever separates us from God is sinful. We must overcome anxiety and worry. And thank God, the Scriptures and the teachings of our Church teach us how.

Let me tell you though one thing that makes me anxious – the statistics on anxiety in America! According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 1 in 8 Americans between 18 and 54 have been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. That's 20 million people! Anxiety is the number one mental health problem for women, and second only to drug and alcohol abuse for men. Anxiety is the most common mental health problem in America, more common than even depression.

Now Ben Franklin once said: "Do not anticipate trouble or worry about what may never happen. Keep in the sunlight." Keep in the sunlight. And as Christians, don't we know the source of the True Light? And don't we know that we can learn to live in that Light?

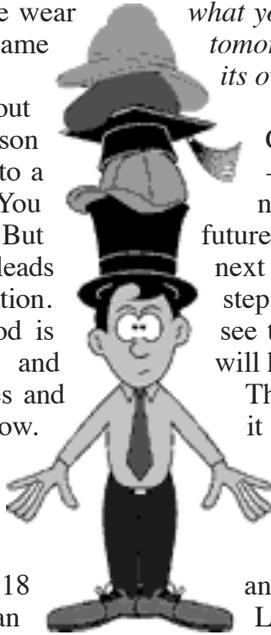
This points us towards the solution to anxiety. We get ourselves tangled up when we are too concerned about what will happen in the future. We worry and obsess about problems that may never come. The solution to this is so simple, it can seem foolish. It lies in one of Jesus's teachings from the Gospel of Matthew:

Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. ... Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.

Fr. Anthony Coniaris once wrote that God always gives us light for our path - but only enough for us to take the next step. When we look towards the future, do we see the light shining on our next step? Or do we only see that all the steps beyond the next are still dark? Do we see the light, or do we worry about what will happen to us in the dark?

This is why anxiety is a sin – because it is rooted in fear, fear of what might happen to us. And worrying about ourselves always drives us away from God. There's a short book by the Christian writer CS Lewis that anyone can read, called "The Screwtape Letters." It's written as the letters of one devil to his underling Wormtongue, to teach him how to be better at tempting humans. The senior devil, Screwtape, tells Wormtongue that "There's nothing like suspense and anxiety for barricading a human's mind against the Enemy [which is what the devils call God]. He wants men to be concerned with what they do; our business is to keep them thinking about what will happen to them."

When we are anxious about our future, about what will happen a month from now, or a year, or a decade, we are living as if we don't believe in



God. We are not trusting that He will be there for us. We are saying, “Even if there’s light shining on the next step I must take, I don’t trust You. I don’t trust that after I take that next step, You will shine your light on the step I must take after that.”

Our worry, our anxiety about the future, leaves us staring in to the unlit distance believing that all is dark. We can’t see; we’re blind. But if we follow our Lord’s teaching – “Do not worry about tomorrow” – we won’t be blind, we will be dazzled by the brightness shining on the next thing we need to do. And trusting in the light of God’s presence, we will focus on who we are now, instead of what we might need to do in the future. Of course it’s a lot easier to say “don’t worry, trust God” than it is to actually put it in to practice. But these are a couple of my own ideas about how to get started:

First, talk to God. If I start thinking that I’ve got to solve a problem all by myself, I start to worry. If it’s true that sharing a problem with someone else will help, how much more true is it that sharing a problem with God will help? So get in the habit of talking to God. Don’t get caught up in using words that sound prayerful. Just talk to God like you’d talk to someone you trust. “God, I’m worried about my meeting tomorrow. I’m worried I’ll get in trouble. I don’t know what to do.”

Next, listen! You know the old saying: We’ve got one mouth and two ears because we should listen twice as much as we talk. So listen for God’s answer, for a quiet voice – a voice in the heart, not the ears. Perhaps you’ll hear something like, “You’re worried about your meeting because you haven’t finished the project you promised you’d finish. Tomorrow you need to apologize for that; tonight you need to at least get started on it.”

Then, test God! This might seem disrespectful. But it’s not. In the book of Malachi, the Lord says:

Prove Me now in this ... if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.

If you want to learn to trust God, you need to test God. You need to do what God tells you to do, to take the next step that he has lit up for you, and see what happens. In my experience I always find that God leads me from anxiety and worry to peace and joy.

This isn’t to belittle the seriousness of mental disorders. It is a sad truth that diseases of the brain are as real as any other physical illness, and that we should all be grateful to God for treatments that modern medicine has found for us. But we must understand that this fact co-exists with the fact that anxiety is also spiritual sickness, brokenness, and sin. And our Lord teaches us how to confront and heal this sickness.

Like any healing, overcoming anxiety takes time. If you are anxious, be gentle with yourself. Settle in to yourself, find the person under all the hats, and try to see the light that God is shining on the next step you should take. This light is His presence. He is here for us. Trust that He is showing you what you need to do next, this very moment. Remember the words of Jesus Christ: “Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?” We must trust that God will be always be here for us. Trust, and we will find peace. Even more, we will find the Prince of Peace.

This reflection is adapted from a speech originally written for Fr. Christopher Metropoulos of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, and SCOBA’s Orthodox Christian Network. Learn more about the powerful ministries of OCN on their website, www.myocn.net.



THE ROYAL DOORS

Adapted from Wikipedia.org

The Royal Doors (also called the Holy Doors or the Beautiful Gates) are the central doors of the Iconostasis in Byzantine Christian Church.

In these Churches, the sanctuary (the entire space of which is referred to as the "altar" among Eastern Christians) is separated from the nave by a screen called the iconostasis. Normally, the iconostasis has three doors in it. The two single doors to the right and left are called "Deacons Doors" or "Angel Doors" and they usually have on them icons of either sainted deacons (Saint Stephen, Saint Lawrence, etc.) or the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. These are the doors that the clergy will normally use when entering the Altar. The central double doors are the "Holy Doors", which are considered to be most sacred, and may only be entered at certain sacred moments during the services, and only by the higher clergy.

The term Royal Doors is commonly used to describe the Holy Doors, because Christ the King passes through these gates during the Divine Liturgy in the form of the Gospel Book (the Word of God) and in the Chalice which contains His Most Precious Body and Blood.

Often the Royal Doors will be only half-height, but sometimes they go almost all the way to the top of the opening. The doors themselves are made of wood or metal and usually have painted on them an icon of the Annunciation in the form of a diptych (the Theotokos on the right door, and the Archangel Gabriel on the left), either alone or with the four Evangelists. Other icons may be used also. The doors may be intricately carved and gilded, and are almost always topped by a cross.

Theologically the Holy Doors represent the gates of Jerusalem, through which Christ entered on Palm Sunday. They also represent the entrance to the Heavenly Jerusalem. There are detailed rules as to when the doors are to be opened during Vespers, Matins and the Divine Liturgy. When the doors are opened, it represents moments when God is especially present to his people, such as during the reading of the Gospel, or when the faithful are receiving Holy Communion. Most of the time the doors are closed. This is symbolic of penitence, a reminder that sin separates the individual from God.

Only the higher clergy (bishops, priests, and deacons) are permitted to go through the Holy Doors, and even they may only pass through them when it is prescribed by the liturgical rubrics.

During Bright Week (the week following Easter Sunday), the Holy Doors and veil remain open the entire week. During this time, the open doors symbolize the open Tomb of Christ. The Epitaphios (icon representing the burial shroud of Christ) is visible on top of the Holy Table (altar table) through the open Holy Doors as a witness of the Resurrection. During Bright Week, the clergy, who would normally use the Deacons Doors to go in and out of the altar, will always enter and exit through the Royal Doors.

When a Bishop serves the Divine Liturgy, the Royal Doors and veil are left open for the entire service. The bishop will always pass through the Royal Doors, even at times when priests or deacons cannot. If the rubrics call for the Royal Doors to be closed, they will be opened for him to pass through, and then immediately closed again.

**A QUESTION OF WEIGHT:
A BIG SIN AND MANY SMALL SINS**

At one time two women came to Confession to a certain elder. The first of them was burdened by one terrible sin, for which her conscience troubled her continuously, and the other had no grave sin but only the “usual” little ones.



The elder, having listened to them, ordered that they go to the orchard and bring stones from it. To her who had the one serious sin, he said: “You take the heaviest stone that you can lift and bring it to me.” And to the other he said: “Here’s a bag for you. Gather small stones and bring them here.” When they both had fulfilled their tasks, the elder thanked them for their obedience and said: “And now, take back that which you have brought to me and put it in its previous place.” The first sinner did this without difficulty, but the other lost her head and returned with virtually a full bag because she couldn’t remember which stone she took from where and she was afraid to deceive the elder.

So then the elder said to her: “Look, your acquaintance has a heavy sin, but she remembers it and constantly mourns over it all the time, but the tears of repentance wash away any sin. You are unable to mourn over your sins because you don’t even remember them, but the weight of your bag is no less than the weight of a big stone.”

Indeed, we must all learn that our many “small” sins, the majority of which are forgotten, in their mass form a terrible weight, which pulls us toward the underworld if we do not free our souls from them by true repentance.



Sunday offering for April 24

Amount	Number
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	2
\$22.00	1 (loose)
\$25.00	1
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	4
\$85.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$200.00	1
\$300.00	1
\$400.00	1
<hr/>	
\$1512.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1512.00

Average / parish household (42): \$19.38

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: (\$688.00)

Year-to-date deficit: (\$17,015.00)

PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.

Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

Pastoral Council:

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Social Committee Chair:

Megan Hartman (619) 540-4291

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Kniahynyckyj: (619) 303-9698



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

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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

Jesus Completes Creation

He healed others by a word. ... But the Lord bestowed sight on the one who was blind from birth – not by a word, but by an outward action. He did this neither casually nor simply because this was how it happened. He did it this way in order to show it was the same hand of God here that had also formed man at the beginning. And therefore when His disciples asked Him why he had been born blind, whether by his own fault or his parents', Jesus said, "Neither this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God might be manifested in him." The work of God is, after all, the forming of man. He did this by an outward action, as Scripture says, "And the Lord took clay from earth, and formed man." Notice here too how the Lord spit on the earth, and made clay and smeared it on his eyes, showing how the ancient creation was made. He was making clear

to those who can understand, that this was the hand of God through which man was formed from clay. For what the creating Word had neglected to form in the womb, this He supplied openly. He did this so that the works of God might be evident in Him, and so that we would now seek for no other hand than that through which humanity was formed. Nor should we seek another Father, knowing that the hand of God which formed us in the beginning, and forms in the womb, has in the last times sought us lost ones out. He is gaining his own lost sheep and putting it on his shoulders and joyfully restoring it to the fold of life.

St. Irenaeus of Lyons

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