

*We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.*

# Orthodox Church of the Mother of God OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson      Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Trudy Ellmore      Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



**Sunday, February 7, 2016**

Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28

**Tone 3**

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17

*36<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost: Afterfeast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple*



**Glory to  
Jesus Christ!**

**Glory  
Forever!**

*Afterfeast of the Meeting  
of our Lord in the  
Temple*

*Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace! From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God. Enlightening those who sat in darkness! Rejoice, and be glad, O righteous elder; You accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, Who grants us the Resurrection.*

## **Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints**

**36<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost — Tone 3. Afterfeast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple.** St. Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus on the Hellespont (4th c.). Ven. Luke of Hellas (ca. 946). The 1,003 Martyrs of Nicomedia (303).

## **Prayer Requests**

### **For Health of:**

**Nicole**, on her birthday, offered with love by her godmother Aunt Tammy, Nicholas & Elizabeth.

**Katie Salcedo**, on her birthday, offered by her father Sub-Deacon Vlashi.

### **For Memory of:**

**Joseph Sheehan**, beloved father of Maribeth Romanofsky.

The ever-memorable servant of God, **Archpriest John Udics**, reposed in the Lord on Wednesday afternoon, 3 February 2016, offered by the Diocese of NY/NJ.

### *Liturgical Schedule:*

#### **Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: No School  
9:40 am: Hours  
9:45 am: General Confession  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup>**

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

### ***Bulletin Sponsors:***

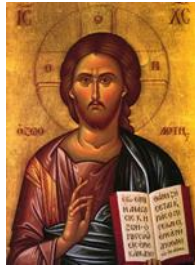
**Maribeth & Andrew  
Romanofsky  
Tammy, Nick & Elizabeth  
Zimmerman  
Sub-Deacon Vlashi**

### *Readings:*



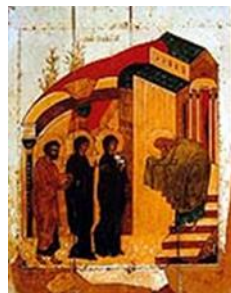
#### **Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17**

immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.



#### **Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28**

**At that time,** Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.



### *Afterfeast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple*

The fifth day of the Afterfeast of the Meeting of the Lord falls on February 7.

### *St Parthenius the Bishop of Lampsacus on the Hellespont*



Saint Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus, was a native of the city of Melitoupolis (in northwestern Asia Minor), where his father Christopher served as deacon. The youth did not receive adequate schooling, but he learned the Holy Scripture by attending church services. He had a good heart, and distributed to the poor the money he earned working as a fisherman.

Filled with the grace of God, St Parthenius from age eighteen healed the sick in the name of Christ, cast out demons and worked other miracles. Learning of the young man's virtuous life, Bishop Philetus of Melitoupolis educated him and ordained him presbyter.



**Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests:** Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend, for a donation of \$10. Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

**Candles/Memorial Candles:** Candles may be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one and \$2 for a small one.

**Private Confessions:** Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times and **General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

**Pannikhida Service:** The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

**Special Announcements** for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:  
[ChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com](mailto:ChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com)

**The Living Clean Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

**The Grey Book Step Meeting Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



### *Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News*

*The Annual Parish Meeting will be held Sunday, February 14, 2016 at 12:15 pm. Please attend. Your voice counts!*

*Trudy Ellmore leaves on her mission trip to the Dominican Republic Tuesday, February 16, returning Tuesday, February 23. Please keep her and her team members in your prayers as they travel and minister to those they meet.*



### *NY/NJ Diocese News*

The church of the **Mother of God, "Joy of All Who Sorrow,"** in Princeton NJ celebrated the opening of its new Church on 29-30 January 2016. Now located at 904 Cherry Hill Road in Princeton, the parish project began with the purchase of a home and property in December of 2010. The grand opening event, marked by prayerful thanksgiving and celebration, began on Friday evening as Archbishop Michael and long-time parishioner, Nina Robinson, cut the ribbon and everyone entered for the first time to celebrate of Great Vespers.

Saturday began with the greeting of Archbishop Michael and his vesting. The church was then blessed and a new *antimension* (a liturgical cloth upon which every Liturgy is celebrated) was



consecrated. Archpriest John Jillions (Chancellor, Orthodox Church in America) brought the relics of Hieromartyr Hilarion, Archbishop of Vereiya, to be placed in the antimension.

Along with Father Jillions, celebrants included: Archpriest Peter Baktis (parish Rector); Archpriest Joseph Lickwar (Chancellor, Diocese of New York & New Jersey); Archpriest Gary Breton (Dean, New Jersey Deanery); Archpriest Sergius Kuharsky; Archpriest James Parsells; Archpriest Maryan Chaykivsky; Priest Volodymyr Chaykivskyi; Archdeacon Michael Suvak; and Sub-deacon Mark Federoff.



## ***Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News***

### **Recognizing our Orthodox Christian Scouts**

SYOSSET, NY [OCA]

Every year since the mid-1940s, religious communities around the US have celebrated “Scout Sunday,” which in 2016 falls on Sunday, February 7.

“The Orthodox Church became involved with Scouting in a formal way in 1955, when Metropolitan Leonty, our Primate, along with the other leaders of the Orthodox Churches met together with the Chief Scout Executive,” according to Archdeacon Kirill Sokolov, Director of [Diaconal and Late Vocations](#) of the Orthodox Church in America and recipient of the Quartermaster Sea Scout Award. “The programs and awards that the Church endorses for scouting programs are a way to encourage the youth of our Church as they grow in their conversion to Christ.”

The [Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting](#) [EOCS], which works under the aegis of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA, supports Orthodox Scouts and units chartered by local parishes in their important work.

“We encourage each of our parishes to actively support the celebration of ‘Scout Sunday’ this weekend,” explained Archpriest Eric G. Tosi, OCA Secretary and Eagle Scout. “We call on the reverend pastors and faithful of our parishes to support and recognize their youth engaged in parish and neighborhood units. Integrating a young person’s Scouting experience in the fullness of Church life and the Church’s youth ministry programs is a powerful witness to our conviction that ‘Christ is all and in all’ [Colossians 3:11].”

Parishes are encouraged to participate in Scout Sunday every year. How can your parish honor its Scouts? Father Eric offers the following suggestions.

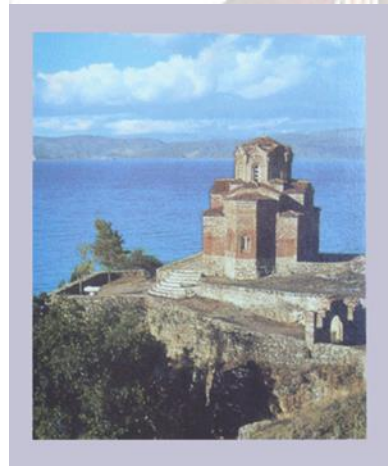
- Develop occasions on which a parish’s Scouts can get together regularly. Quite often, Scouts are scattered across different troops, dens and packs, and rarely interact. Consciously planning special gatherings will get them to identify with one another.
- Look into sponsoring a parish Scout troop or pack. While getting Orthodox Christian scouts together under the “church’s roof” will help build identity, this also is a good way to open up the program to others—and introducing them, perhaps for the first time, to Orthodox Christianity. Many scout troops are in need of meeting space, so parishes that can do so can “rise to the occasion.”
- Encourage Scouts to pursue the Saint George, Chi-Rho, or Alpha-Omega Orthodox Christian badges. Requirements can be found on the [EOCS web site](#). Hosting an award ceremony is always a boost to the parish community.

- Nominate local adult scout leaders for the Prophet Elias Adult Religious Award to recognize their good work and ministry.
- Organize a parish service project for Scouts. This is a “win-win” situation—Scouts need to earn service. Have the parish’s scouts do a service project around the church or for a parishioner. Scouts need to pursue service projects, while another item on the parish’s “things to do list” will benefit the whole community.
- Encourage Scouts to complete their Eagle or Gold Award project at the parish. Such projects are a tremendous resource involving the whole scout troop and parish—another “win-win” situation.
- Parishes and individuals interested in knowing more about how Scouting can be integrated into parish and Church life are encouraged to avail themselves of the resources available on the EOCS web site and to contact area or diocesan youth directors. [Father Eric](#) and [Archdeacon Kirill](#) are also available to answer questions and connect you with appropriate Scouting resources in your area.



### **Urgent Request for Doctors to Serve on Medical Mission Trips**

OCMC is in urgent need of a physician and/or a physician's assistant to join Medical Mission Trips to Uganda (May 9-21) and Guatemala (April 8-17 and August 26-September 4). Medical personnel are needed to conduct medical clinics and offer health instruction. OCMC invites you to join these opportunities to offer physical and spiritual care to people for whom medical care is virtually unattainable. For more information, please visit [www.ocmc.org](http://www.ocmc.org), e-mail [teams@ocmc.org](mailto:teams@ocmc.org), or call 1-877 GO FORTH (ext. 141).



### ***Prayers by the Lake, St. Nikolai Velimirovich, XLIII:***

*People can do me no evil, as long as I have no wounds.*

I saw two caves, one of which revealed an echo, while the other had none. And many curious children were visiting the former and were mischievously carrying out shouting matches with the cave. But from the other cave visitors were quickly returning, because it was not answering them with an echo.

If my soul is wounded, every worldly evil will resound within it. And people will laugh at me, and will throng more and more strongly with their shouting.

But truly, evil-speaking people will not harm me, if my tongue has forgotten how to speak evil.  
Nor will external malice sadden me, if there is no malice in my heart to resound like a goatskin drum.  
Nor shall I be able to respond to ire with ire, if the lair of ire within me has been vacated and there is nothing to be aroused.

Nor will human passions titillate me, if the passions within me have been reduced to ashes.  
Nor will the unfaithfulness of friends sadden me, if I have resolved to have You for my friend.



Nor can the injustice of the world crush me, if injustice has been expelled from my thoughts.  
Nor will the deceitful spirits of worldly pleasure, honor and power entice me, if my soul is like an immaculate bride, who receives only the Holy Spirit and yearns for Him alone.

People cannot shove anyone into hell, unless that person shoves himself. Nor can people hoist anyone up on their shoulders to the throne of God, unless that person elevates himself.

If my soul has no open windows, no mud can be thrown into it.

Let all nature rise up against me; it can do nothing to me except a single thing--to become the grave of my body more swiftly.

Every worldly crop is covered with fertilizer, so that it will sprout as soon as possible and grow better. If my soul, alas, were to abandon her virginity and receive the seed of this world into herself, then she would also have to accept the manure, which the world throws onto its field.

But I call upon You day and night: come dwell in my soul and close all those places where my enemies can enter. Make the cavern of my soul empty and silent, so that no one from the world will want to enter it.

O my soul, my only concern, be on guard and learn to distinguish between the voices striking your ears. And once you hear the voice of your Lord, abandon your silence and resound with all your strength.

O my soul, cavern of eternity, never permit temporal thieves to enter you and kindle their fire within you. Keep quiet, when they shout to you. Stay still, when they bang on you. And patiently await your Master. For He will truly come.

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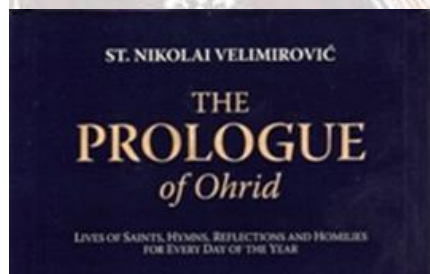
### *Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, XLII:*

#### **II. The Realities of the Spiritual World Freedom**

In truth there is only one freedom - the holy freedom of Christ, whereby He freed us from sin, from evil, from the devil. It binds us to God. All other freedoms are illusory, false, that is to say, they are all, in fact, slavery.

St. Justin Popovich, Ascetical and Theological Chapters, II.36

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#### **1. Saint Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus**

Parthenius was the son of a deacon from the town of Melitopolis. As a child he remembered well the words of the Gospel and endeavored to fulfill them. He settled in the area of a lake where he fished. He then sold the fish and distributed the money to the poor. By God's Providence he was chosen as bishop of Lampsacus. He cleansed the town of paganism, closed the idolatrous temples, built many churches and strengthened the faithful in the Faith. Through prayer, he healed every manner of illness and he was particularly powerful over evil spirits. On one occasion when he wanted to cast out an evil spirit from an insane man, the evil spirit begged him not to do so. Parthenius said to him: "I will give you another man into whom you can enter and in him, you can dwell." The evil spirit asked him: "Who is this man?" "I am that man," replied the saint, "enter and dwell in me!" Upon hearing this, the evil spirit fled as though burned by fire crying out: "How can I enter into the house of God!" St. Parthenius lived a

long time and through his work manifested an abundant love for God and man. Parthenius entered into the eternal rest of Christ in the fourth century.

## **2. The Venerable Luke of Hellas**

Luke was born in Castoria. Even as a child, he never desired to taste meat and always conducted his life in chastity and in prayer. At one time, Luke entered a field to sow grains of wheat, but along the way he distributed a greater portion of the grains of wheat to the poor and the lesser portion which was left over, he planted. From that lesser amount of seeds of wheat, God gave him a greater harvest than had previously come from the entire amount. After that, Luke left his widowed mother and entered a monastery. The grieving mother prayed earnestly to God to reveal to her the secret where her son could be found. God heard the prayers of the mother. The abbot of that monastery, where Luke had fled, dreamed on three consecutive nights that a certain woman sharply rebuked him because he took away her only son. The abbot then ordered Luke to immediately return to his mother. Luke went, visited with his mother and once again, parted from her without returning. He atoned on "Mount Johannitsa," near Corinth. At night he prayed to God and during the day he worked in the garden and in the field, not for his sake but for the sake of the indigent and the visitors. However, Luke fed only on bread made of barley. God bestowed upon him the gift of working miracles. Luke died peacefully in the year 946 A.D. From time to time, Chrism [oil] flowed from his relics.

## **3. The Venerable Mastridia**

Mastridia lived in Jerusalem where she led an austere life of asceticism. A certain young man fell in love with her and began to annoy her. In order to save herself and this young man from sin, Mastridia took a small basket of moistened berries and retreated into the wilderness. She spent seventeen years in the wilderness and during the entire time, by the power of God, neither did she lace berries, which she brought, nor did her clothing wear out. Mastridia died peacefully about the year 580 A.D.

## **4. The One-Thousand Three Martyrs at Nicomedia**

They all suffered from Christ during the reign of Emperor Diocletian.

### **Hymn of Praise**

#### *The Holy Martyrs at Nicomedia*

The city of Nicomedia, as a star, shines,  
As Venus, the star; the eastern throne.  
But, one day, by the will of Duclianus,  
Four courtiers were beheaded,  
Eusebius, Vasa, Eutychius, Courageous  
And wonderful Basilides, by glory unfaded,  
For the Name of Christ, were beheaded  
And by this, Nicomedia was darkened.  
Those four heads, the end of the horror were not  
But only the first blossoms of the mown grass:  
A thousand slaves; servants, obedient ones,  
The four martyrs, that faithfully served,  
A thousand as one and, three more,  
Created a clamor, as though they drank wine.

No, not wine did they drink, but the truth intoxicated them,

And the Blood and the victory of the Son of God.  
O emperor ungodly; we, also, are Christians,  
We also are Christians, do whatever you will!  
And to go there, we desire  
Where our Blessed Master went  
O wonderful daring! O wonderful fidelity!  
But, the emperor's cruelty, this did not abate,  
And a thousand souls departed the earth,  
To them opened wide the Gates of Paradise.

### Reflection

St. Isidore of Pelusium interprets certain words of Holy Scripture in this manner: *Two [women] will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left* (St. Matthew 24:4). This means that many are dedicating themselves to the spiritual life, but with different intentions; some sincerely and steadfastly and others negligently and vainly. The first will be taken into the kingdom of God and the others will be left behind. What does the prayer of the Cup mean? And why did the Lord pray that this cup of Suffering pass from Him? *O My Father, if this Cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done!* (St. Matthew 26:42). This means that no one should seek out adversity but when adversity does come, a Christian should accept it and courageously endure it. Concerning the Five Foolish Virgins (St. Matthew, Chapter 25), St. Isidore says: "Indeed, all of them had retained their virginity, but they did not possess the other virtues, especially charity. Virginity alone is not sufficient to enter the kingdom of God. Virginity does not help at all, if the virgin is proud and selfish."

### Contemplation

To contemplate the Lord Jesus as a Sower:

1. As a Sower whose seed grows slowly and surely;
2. As a Sower of the new teaching, new power and new order;
3. As a Sower of the new spiritual food by which mankind will be fed until the end of time.

### Homily:

**About the narrow-minded, to whom crime is closer than the love of God**

*"But you seek to kill Me because My word has no place in you" (St. John 8:37).*

Why was the word of Christ unable to prevail among the Jewish elders? Because they were so filled with malice that there was no room in them for the divine seed; for the divine good news. All that grew in their souls was the sowing of Satan, the Antichrist. That is why they sought to kill Christ. Through the Blessed Psalmist, the Lord speaks: *Empty yourselves, [desist] and know that I am God* (Psalm 46:10). Therefore, it is necessary to empty oneself of everything that is opposed to God, i.e., of everything in us that hinders the light of knowledge of God from dwelling in us. When man empties himself of that, then and only then, can he understand that God is God. As long as the soul of man is filled with anti-godly thoughts, anti-godly feelings and anti-godly desires, until then, the soul of man is totally unable to listen or to receive the word of God. Whoever does not have God within him, that one acts by some infernal impulse to uproot God from the soul of him who possesses Him [God]. *You seek to kill Me.* Why? Because not one divine word of Christ was able to find shelter nor acceptance in their godless hearts. Having nothing in common with Christ the Lord, the Jewish elders, from the beginning, were unable to have any kind of friendly relations with Him.



O Lord Jesus, our Blessed Savior, help us to empty ourselves of all sinful seeds in us, that Your holy word may be able to enter into us and to enlighten, strengthen and resurrect us.

**To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.**



***The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration with Abbott Tryphon***

**The Next Generation**

***How do we keep our youth in the Church?***

We are living in an age that has witnessed changes on a massive scale as never before. The way we communicate has changed with the coming of the internet, with information available that would have required a library and advanced degrees to access in the past. Ideas and information are available that leave our youth with choices that were never available a generation ago.

Moral norms have changed, with values and lifestyles that would have never been seen as acceptable in the past becoming part of mainstream. Gay marriage, the high divorce rate, children being raised by unwed parents, and profane music that sounds like it came from the underworld (which inspired it, I'm sure). Child sexual abuse is reaching shocking numbers, with clergy, Boy Scout leaders, coaches and police officers under arrest. With the environmental crisis increasing and political unrest spreading, hope is fading. Our world is polarized in ways that are mind boggling, and the economy has lowered the hopes and expectations of a whole generation.

With all that has changed in our world, is it any wonder young people are abandoning the Christian faith in droves? With the youthful questioning of authority, it is not enough to simply expect them to accept the authority of bishops, priests, and the traditions and teachings of the Church. There needs to be a change in the way we of the older generations communicate with our youth.

In this age of information we must demonstrate to our youth the difference between information and wisdom. Wisdom is that which is passed down from the past and which imparts substance and enlightenment. Wisdom is not about information, and does not compete with worldly knowledge. Wisdom need not be in conflict with science, nor be linked to narrow mindedness. Wisdom is that which not only connects us to the best of human knowledge and experience, but links us to that which is eternal. Wisdom gives us the ability to relate to our Creator, to our culture and to others. The urgency of imparting this message is great, for we have a whole generation that is in danger of losing faith in God.

It is not enough to expect our young people to attend services if we do not listen to them, respect them, and try to understand the world that is confronting them. They are growing up in a different world than people of my generation experienced, and this important difference must be acknowledged and respected. We can't simply teach the truth to our youth, we must live it in a way that makes it real for them. We must be patient with them, be open to their struggles and non-confrontational when they disagree with us, or we will lose them forever to Christ.

Today's young people have the same hopes and dreams that previous generations held, but this fast changing world is depriving them of hope. Nihilism has become the religion of countless numbers of our youth, with the result that life has become meaningless. The information age has driven God out of societal, cultural and governmental prominence, resulting in mass disbelief.

We who are of the older generations must witness to the wealth of truth that is in the ancient knowledge and wisdom of the Church by demonstrating it's worth in how we live. If young people do not see a genuine living out of the Faith in us, they will keep looking for truth in directions that will take them far from it. Young people are worthy of our love and respect, and worthy of sharing with us the life in Christ that is their heritage as well. The Church will not be a draw to our youth unless her members demonstrate

holiness of life and reach out with love, patience and understanding, offering something that is seen as real by today's young people.

Finally, today's young people need to see joy in the hearts of those of us who have taken on Christ. If we do not have joy in our hearts the youth will see nothing that is attractive to them, and will continue in the wasteland of consumerism, materialism, nihilism, and all hope for the future of our planet will have died.

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

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### ***Daily Reflection*** **Keeping Things Light**

"Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves.

And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah...' (Mt 17: 1-4)

On this occasion, Peter "does not know what to say" (Mk 9: 6), because the revelation is overwhelming. But this doesn't stop him from saying something. It is a suggestion. It's something to the effect of, Lord, this is so good, let's all just stay here and live happily ever after. Forget about all those people down there.

This is a case of spiritual intoxication; of a novice in the early stages of encountering grace, a bit like someone in love for the first time. In this phase we may say and do things that look quite silly in hindsight. We might forget about our responsibilities, tend to forget about the rest of the people in our lives, and sillier yet, offer suggestions or even advice to those far more experienced than we are; to those who have been leading a spiritual life all along, before we decided to take it up.

Today let me ask God to plant my feet firmly on the ground, when my head is in the clouds. And let me receive my enthusiasm for spiritual life both with gratitude and, when need be, a sense of humor, not taking myself too seriously. Let me let Him keep things His way, – light.

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### ***Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers***

#### **"Bear Witness" by St. John Chrysostom**

Everyone looks at what we do and not what we say. Scripture says, "Thou shalt be a witness unto all men," not just to friendly people, but also to unbelievers. For witnesses aren't meant to persuade those who already know, but those who don't know. Let us be trustworthy witnesses. How can we be trustworthy? By the life we lead. The Jews assaulted Christ and our passions assault us. They tell us to reject our testimony. But we must not obey them. We are witnesses from God. But He has sent us to testify of Him. Let us testify and persuade those who need to decide who He is. If we don't testify, then



we also have to answer for their mistake. If people wouldn't accept an exceedingly wicked witness in an earthly court, much less would they accept one here when considering such great issues. We say that we have heard Christ and that we believe the things He has promised. Then, they say, show it by your works. For your life testifies of the opposite - that you don't believe...We and not just the martyrs will be witnesses for Christ. They are called martyrs because they endured everything to speak the truth when told to reject the faith. So, we must not be overcome when our passions tell us we are to reject Him.

*From Hudson, CD, Sharrer, JA, and Vanker, L. Day by Day with the Early Church Fathers. Hendrickson: MA, 1999. Pg. 23.*

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### ***The Philokalia: Daily Readings***

Cleanse your intellect from anger, rancor and shameful thoughts, and you will be able to perceive the indwelling of Christ.

- St Maximus the Confessor, 400 Chapters on Love

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### ***Has someone offended thee? ( Saint John Chrysostom )***

Has someone offended thee? Guard thy breast with the sign of the Cross; remember what took place on the Cross, and all will be extinguished. Think not of offenses only, but recall also whatever good thou hast received from the one who has offended thee, and at once thou shalt grow meek. Bring to mind the fear of God, and quickly thou shalt grow more temperate and calm.

Train thyself not to offend another during offenses themselves, and then, when offended, thou wilt not feel grief. Think to thyself that he who is offending thee is in a frenzy and not in his right mind, and then thou wilt not be vexed at the offense.





## February – 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:30 Meeting of Christ in the Temple	2	3	4	5 8:00-9:15pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	6 6:30 Vespers
7 9:30 No School 9:40 Hours 9:45 Gen'l Confession 10:00 Divine Liturgy / Social	8	9 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Step Mtg. NA Grp	10	11	12 8:00-9:15pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	13 6:30 Vespers
14 9:30 Sunday School 9:40 Hours 10:00 Divine Liturgy / Social	15	16 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Step Mtg. NA Grp	17	18	19 7:30-9:30pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg. 2 yr. Anniversary	20 6:30 Vespers
21 9:30 Sunday School 9:40 Hours 10:00 Divine Liturgy / Social	22	23 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Step Mtg. NA Grp	24	25	26 8:00-9:15pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	27 6:30 Vespers
28 9:30 Sunday School 9:40 Hours 10:00 Divine Liturgy/ Social	29					