

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: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, July 31, 2016

Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8

Tone 5

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14

6th Sunday after Pentecost; Forefeast of the Procession of the Honorable and Lifegiving Cross of the Lord



**Glory to
Jesus Christ!**

**Glory
Forever!**

*Forefeast of the Procession
of the Honorable and
Lifegiving Cross of the Lord*

*O Lord, save Your people, And bless Your inheritance!
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians Over their adversaries.
And by virtue of the Cross, Preserve Your habitation!*

(Troparion – Tone 1)

*As You were voluntarily crucified for our sake, Grant mercy to those
who are called by Your name; Make all Orthodox Christians glad by
Your power, Granting them victories over their adversaries,
By bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Your weapon of peace!*

(Kontakion – Tone 4)

Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints

6th Sunday After Pentecost — Tone 5. Forefeast of the Procession of the Honorable and Lifegiving Cross of the Lord. Righteous Eudocimus of Cappadocia (9th c.). Martyr Julitta at Cæsarea (304-305). St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre (448). Hieromartyr Benjamin, Metropolitan of Petrograd and Gdovsk (1922), and those with him: Archimandrite Sergius and the Laymen, Yuri and John.

Weekly Bulletin Sponsors

For Health of:

Alex Guedes, on his upcoming surgeries and also for his family, offered by the parishioners, the parish council and the sisterhood.

Jaclyn Dantine, on her birthday, offered by her family with love.

Erika Freed, on her birthday, offered by her aunt, Lore Stefy.

Russell Kromline, on his ordination to Deacon at the Orthodox Church of the Mother of God, Joy of all who Sorrow in Princeton, offered by Sub-Deacon Edward & Holly Dawson..

In Memory of:

Aimee Zuroski, offered by Paul & Linda Jankowski.

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, July 31st

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, August 6th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, August 7th

9:40 am: Hours

9:45 am: General
Confession

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, August 13th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, August 14th

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, August 20th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, August 21th

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors:

*The Dantine Family;
Lore Stefy; Sub-Deacon
Edward & Holly Dawson;
Paul & Linda Jankowski*

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 5th Tone:

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.

(Psalm 11:8)

vs. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!

(Psalm 11:2)

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14

Brethren, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

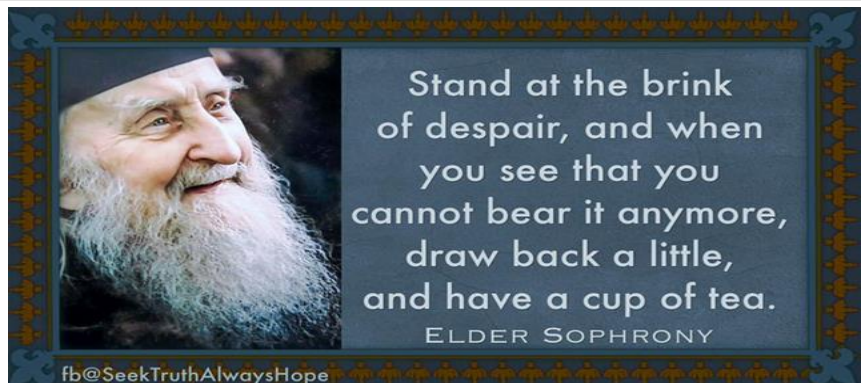
Alleluia in the 5th Tone:

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth
from generation to generation. *(Psalm 88:2)*

vs. For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; My truth will be prepared in
the heavens." *(Psalm 88:3)*

Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8

At that time, he crossed over in a boat, and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" --he then said to the Paralytic--"rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.





Righteous Eudocimus of Cappadocia

Saint Boris was one of the sons of St Saint Eudocimus, a native of Cappadocia (Asia Minor), lived during the ninth century during the reign of Emperor Theophilus (829-842). He was the son of the pious Christians Basil and Eudokia, an illustrious family known to the emperor. They raised their son "in discipline and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6: 4), planting in his soul a sincere faith and holy virtues.

The righteous life of St Eudocimus was devoted to pleasing God and serving his neighbor. Having given a vow to remain unmarried and chaste, he avoided conversation with women and did not look at them. He would speak only with his own mother, whom he greatly respected. The emperor valued his virtue and talents, so he appointed St Eudocimus as governor of Chorazane, Armenia. Fulfilling his duty as a servant of God, St Eudocimus governed the people justly and with kindness. He concerned himself with the unfortunate, and with orphans and widows, and he was a defender of the common people. His personal Christian exploits which he did in secret, were known only to God.

Eudocimus pleased God by his blameless life, and the Lord called him at age 33. Lying on his deathbed, St Eudocimus gave final instructions to place him in the grave in those clothes in which he would meet death. Then he sent everyone out of the room and entreated the Lord that no one would see his end, just as no one saw his secret efforts during life. His attendants buried him as he had instructed them. Right after the death of St Eudocimus miracles took place at his grave. Many sick people were healed, and the news of the miraculous healings spread.

After 18 months, the mother of St Eudocimus came from Constantinople to venerate his relics. She gave orders to remove the stone, dig up the ground, and open the grave. Everyone beheld the face of the saint, bright as if alive, altogether untouched by decay. A great fragrance came from him. They took up the coffin with the relics from the earth, and they dressed the saint in new clothes. His mother wanted to take the relics of her son to Constantinople, but the Kharsian people would not clear a path for their holy one. After a certain time the hieromonk Joseph, having lived and served at the grave of the saint, transported the relics of St Eudocimus to Constantinople. There they were placed in a silver reliquary in the church of the Most Holy Theotokos, built by the parents of the saint.

St Eudocimus is considered by the Russian Church to be one of the special protectors and intercessors before God of the family hearth. He was, as his name implies, truly successful in every virtue.



Bulletin Sponsor: 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. Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

Memorial Candles: Candles be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

Private Confessions: Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

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

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

There will be a parish council meeting today after Divine Liturgy.

IN SEARCH OF.....

*Old pictures of the church, her people, her priests.
Stories of special occasions and/or celebrations.
Stories of how you found your way to this parish.
Contact information for the families of the founders of the parish*

WHY?

In celebration of 50 years of ministry, and with the blessing of our rector Fr. Matthew, Trudy is compiling photos and stories in order to write a history of the founding and continued ministry of the our parish, the Orthodox Church of the Mother of God. The working title is "Jewel Box in Mays Landing".

Give Trudy a call at 609-593-6181 (h), 610-393-9897 (c); email her trellmore@gmail.com; or simply talk to her at church to share your story and pictures!



NY/NJ Diocese News

Choir Workshop

The Commission on Liturgical Music (CoLM) and Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in Syracuse NY hosted a workshop, "The Character of Choir Singing," on 23 July 2016. The highly regarded and accomplished facilitator, Mark Bailey, presented key points in lecture and demonstrated them by rehearsing a choir comprised of the thirty participants. He stressed the need for Orthodox music to illuminate the text; the role of music in matching form and function; and the need for choral style to confirm prayer/worship through appropriate pulse and rhythm. The workshop concluded with an open and candid question and answer session.

"Mark Bailey began his lecture with the premise that music has the ability to elevate liturgical texts to something out of the ordinary," said Alexis Van Zalen of Rochester NY (professional musician and graduate of the Eastman School of Music). She continued, "He then demonstrated how specific musical characteristics, such as pulse, enhance text declamation. I especially appreciated how he used his information to guide us to sing in ways that emphasize the text."

Matushka Natalie Stavrevsky, of Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Rochester NY, said: "A truly enriching experience: to be gathered with choir members of all ages, all with the common goal of enhancing our corporate choir ministries and our experience of Liturgy."

The event, like all diocesan music conferences offered by CoLM, gathered a wide range of singers, choir directors, clergy, and various age groups. As always, it enabled fellowship, mutual support, and renewal of acquaintances in addition to invaluable learning.

Visit the CoLM website for resources and information:
http://www.nynjoca.org/liturgical_music.html



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

Sr. Vassa to speak in Eastern PA October 17-20

Sister Dr. Vassa [Larin], the well-known liturgiologist of the University of Vienna, Austria and nun of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia who hosts a popular YouTube series of catechetical programs titled “Coffee with Sr. Vassa”, will offer five presentations across eastern Pennsylvania October 17-20, 2016.

On Monday, October 17, Sister Vassa will speak at Holy Cross Church, 1725 Holy Cross Lane, Williamsport, PA at 7:00 p.m. Her topic will be “Sharing the Gospel in the Age of the Internet.”

Saint Tikhon’s Monastery and Seminary, 175 Saint Tikhon’s Road, South Canaan, PA will host Sister Vassa on Tuesday, October 18 at noon, when she will speak on “Contemporary Challenges in Pursuing Vocations.” At 7:00 p.m. that evening, she will speak on “Keeping Christ in Orthodoxy” at Holy Trinity Church, 401 East Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA.

“Scripture in Orthodox Liturgy and Everyday Life” will be the topic of Sister Vassa’s presentation at Christ the Saviour Church, 5501 Old Locust Lane, Harrisburg, PA on Wednesday, October 19 at 7:00 p.m.

The final presentation in the series will be delivered at Saint Stephen Cathedral, 8598 Verre Road, Philadelphia, PA on Thursday, October 20, at 7:00 p.m. Sister Vassa’s topic will be “Keeping Christ in Orthodoxy.”

The series is being presented by the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania of the Orthodox Church in America and the Orthodox Council of Churches of South Central Pennsylvania. A PDF flyer is available on-line.



Mission, Vision, & Values

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20):

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Our Mission:

As the official missions agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States it is OCMC’s mission to make disciples of all nations by bringing people to Christ and His Church.

Our Vision:

That all people may come to know the saving love of our Lord: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Our Values

1. We value proclaiming and witnessing Christ to all people with priority given to those who have never heard or accepted the Gospel.
2. We value sharing the love of Christ for the care of the total person – spiritual and physical.
3. We value ministry in the language and culture of the people.
4. We value our people – well-trained Missionaries, Staff, Board, Supporters, Indigenous Leadership and those being served.
5. We value communities, parishes, and individuals that are mission-minded and have active mission involvement.
6. We value being an open and transparent agency that values the gifts of stewardship provided to us by the faithful.



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PRISON MINISTRY
AN AGENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS

Coping When a Loved One is in Prison

Taking Care of Yourself During a Friend or Family Member's Jail Time

Family or Friends Behind Bars Can be a Strain – Alex on Morguefile.com

Dealing with a family member in prison can be a challenge for those left behind, who may feel anger, grief, guilt, betrayal, overwhelmed and isolation from the community.

Staying in touch with a family member in jail can be a heartbreaking and complicated thing. Not only is it difficult to keep in touch through unpredictable phone access and prison transfers; having a husband, wife, sibling, parent, child, friend, or other relative behind bars can be a devastating emotional experience. Your loved one can't help you through this – in fact, he or she may be part of the problem – so it's important to learn to give yourself the care and support you'll need throughout this trying time.

Keeping in Touch with a Loved One in Prison

Keeping in touch, whether by in-person visits, phone calls or snail mail letters, can be a double-edged sword. It's a virtual part-time job to figure out prison schedules and which days visits are allowed; phone calls can only be made out of the prison, not in; and even sending letters can get complicated when a prisoner is moved unexpectedly.

What's more, people change and relationships change when you're not able to interact naturally for an extended period of time – especially when something as loaded as crime and a prison sentence stand between you but can't easily be discussed.

Grief and Loss for a Family Member Who's Gone to Jail

According to the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO) in Melbourne, Australia, the loss experienced by family members and those closest to someone who has been incarcerated is “similar to the death of a loved one.” You can still communicate, but it can feel like jail is a world away from daily life – and the person you loved may never seem the same after the crime he or she has committed.

When someone dies, people mourn and move on using rituals like a funeral and with the support of community and friends. But when a loved one goes to prison, that kind of acknowledgment and support is almost totally absent. In fact, the community and friends can be part of the problem if they lack sensitivity or blame the family along with the prisoner.

Guilt, Shame and the Social Stigma of Crime

If someone you love is in prison, it can be difficult to distance yourself from the guilt – and the social stigma – of what they've done. Woodville Community Services of Sydney, Australia, says that families of convicted offenders may feel they are somehow responsible for their loved one's actions, or that they are sullied by their connection to someone in jail.

In addition to these kinds of recriminations from within, fear and the media's portrayal of offenders can lead community, family, and friends to turn against those closest to an inmate. VACRO says, “you can feel you are being judged alongside the offender.”

Supporting Yourself and Taking Care of Your Emotional Needs

Parents, children, spouses and partners in prison need your help and support – but equally (or more) important is learning to take care of yourself during this challenging time. You may feel confused, angry, lonely, ashamed, worried, desperate, and scared all at once, or in turn – all of these responses are normal and legitimate under the circumstances.

A few self-care tips from organizations that offer support to families of prisoners:

- Find someone you can talk to honestly about how you feel, be it a counselor or a trusted friend, but don't feel you have to tell everyone. Some people will respond with love and support while others will distance themselves, so learn to rely on those who are accepting and who offer help.
- Give yourself permission to feel the way you do, even if that means feeling angry at your loved one for leaving you, or overwhelm at your life as it is now.

“Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful” founded in 1966

- Take care of your survival needs and your emotional needs with at least as much care as you give to the emotional needs of your absent partner or loved one.
- Seek financial support if the loss of your family member or partner’s income leaves you on shaky financial ground.
- You may find it helpful to seek out online resources and forums for family members and loved ones of inmates. There are plenty of people going through the same thing you are, and it may help to share and read some of their stories.

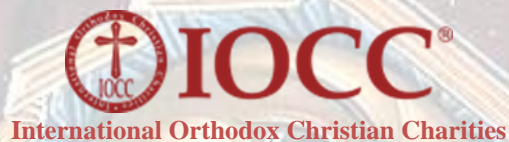
Resources:

Victoria Law Foundation, “VACRO Factsheet4: Living with a family member in prison,” Melbourne, Australia, January 7, 2009.

Woodville Community Services Inc., Pamphlet: “Do you have a family member in prison?”, Sydney, Australia, 2009.

Mar 27, 2009 by: Victoria Anisman-Reiner posted on Suite101

Source of article: <http://suite101.com/article/coping-when-a-loved-one-is-in-prison-a105398>



Through IOCC, you are making a world of difference

IOCC responds to some of the most vulnerable people... families, refugees and displaced persons, the elderly, school children, orphans and people with disabilities based solely on need.

Your support has made it possible to provide humanitarian relief, sustainable development and self-help programs to people across Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America. Since the need for help is great, IOCC continually works to expand its programs to other areas.

IOCC works at the invitation of the Orthodox Church in the host countries where it serves. The Church helps identify the needs and beneficiaries ... and IOCC implements the relief efforts. It's a partnership.

And frankly, very little would happen without the support of our donors – people like you!

Ultimate Goal

Our ultimate goal is to firmly establish solutions that last ... that can sustain themselves. With your support we strive to build the capacity of the families and communities we serve. We strive to provide the resources to improve their own financial and physical well-being so they become self-sufficient.

And we remain in a given region or country until the project(s) is completed, or in some cases until the funds are exhausted.

Locations

Over the course of our history you've help make it possible for us to assist people in 50 countries...

- care for families suffering from disasters by rebuilding homes, schools, and other relief actions
- bring smiles and full stomachs to poor farmers and entrepreneurs with micro-loans
- give vocational training for refugees so they can find work in their new home
- provide health care to children, infants and mothers
- brighten the future of children with new school books, supplies, and even rebuilding schools and furnishing them
- prevent disease and extend lives by drilling wells, improving sanitation, and stomping out preventable diseases in Africa ... and on it goes.

Please explore the individual country pages for specific projects and stories of the people you've helped through your financial support in action.

Priority Places

The Balkans: IOCC has undertaken a variety of programs for short-term and long-term relief in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, and Montenegro.

Cameroon: IOCC has provided clean water access, educational services and medical assistance to Cameroon since 2008.

Ethiopia: IOCC has helped improve access to water, food, education and job opportunities as well as combatting the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ethiopia...

Georgia: Since 1994, IOCC has helped the people of Georgia by providing counseling, food, and economic development loans.

Greece: Since 2012, IOCC has been responding to the human toll of Greece's economic and refugee crisis.

Haiti: IOCC has continued to serve Haiti communities since the 2010 earthquake with several relief supplies.

Iraq: IOCC's work in Iraq includes providing emergency assistance for children and families displaced by ongoing violence.

Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza: Responding to humanitarian needs in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza since 1997, IOCC has improved the lives of many vulnerable groups in times...

Jordan: IOCC has provided emergency aid, health and medical support as well as economic empowerment to Jordan since 2005.

Lebanon: IOCC has implemented programs in Lebanon that address a range of social issues, from refugee relief to community development and education.

Romania: IOCC has been in Romania since 2000 to help with emergency aid and development programs for families and children.

Syria: IOCC is responding to the recent crisis in Syria by providing aid to people who have been displaced by civil war.

Uganda: IOCC has been in Uganda since 2009 providing educational support and clean water.

United States: IOCC supports literacy, education, disaster preparedness and response in the US.



Don't Be Lukewarm

Categories: Student Reflection by Alex Kuvshinoff

I know your works, that are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spit you out of My mouth. Revelation 3:15-17

In my four years at school, I have come across hundreds of Orthodox college students. From being staff at Camp Saint Paul and Ionian Village to College Conference East and several other regional and district OCF retreats; from my position on the OCF Student Leadership Board to my internship at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; and finally, from being president of my local OCF chapter at Fordham University, I have met all types and kinds of Orthodox college students. One thing I want to warn against that I've seen and experienced is being "lukewarm."

At Fordham I played club soccer all four years. I played growing up, and captained my high school team as well. If you were standing next to me and asked me right now if I were a soccer player, I would say "yes, of course." I don't have to be physically on the field playing, to consider myself a soccer player. The same goes for being an Orthodox Christian. I am not a Christian simply when I am in church. I am a Christian when I am on the soccer field. I am a Christian in my science classes. I am also a Christian when I am at a college party.

We all know college is a time when our faith is tested. I do not need to explain the struggles of drinking, drugs, and hookup culture. What does need to be examined, however, is the apathy that many students have towards the faith. I am no exception. My freshman year I was probably going to church once a month, max. Now, I find myself going regularly. My sophomore and junior years I did several internships in various marketing positions. Now I find myself wrapping up an internship at the Archdiocese in New York.

A huge problem many students have, especially at Fordham, is they get caught up not only in socializing, but also in their studies. The pressures students put on themselves to get the top internships and ace finals are horrifying.

At the final judgment God isn't going to ask you what you got on your accounting final, he is going to ask you if you followed his commandments. Think of the context of the 4th commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God” (Ex 20:8-10). Many college students can't find the time to go to church, let alone a one-hour OCF meeting. If you call yourself a Christian, then you are accepting the belief that this world is not permanent and that the real point of our creation is to follow Christ now, so that we can be engulfed by His love after death. This not only starts with the Liturgy, but also carries over into our everyday lives. Whether it is in our office at work, in our class at school, or at a bar off campus, we are always called to be loving, practicing Christians.

A priest at once gave me this valuable advice that I always carry with me:

No one said being Orthodox was easy, no one said it would always be fun. But the reward of a life in Christ is to join Him in heaven. God should be at the tip of your tongue in everything you say, and at the tip of your fingers in everything you do.

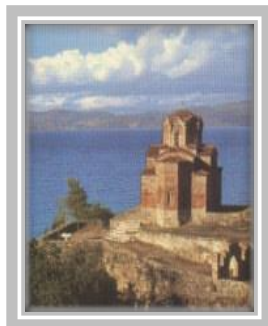
We aren't all called to work for the Church, but we are all called to love God, and love others because they, too, are created in the image and likeness of Him. We become successful accountants, lawyers, marketers, and historians so that we can use our living to benefit others, starting with our family and branching out to the poor and needy. We work as scientists to discover more hidden wonders in this world created for us by God. While in the office we express love and kindness to our coworkers. We go to the local watering hole with the intention of having a fun night out with our friends, not to get blackout drunk and make irresponsible and irreversible decisions.

Too many students compartmentalize their faith, and put it into a box (one usually too small). But in reality, what we are is, “a Christian who likes soccer,” or “a Christian who is a bio major,” or “a Christian who is interning.” We are first and foremost Christians; that is our most important full-time job. And if we dare to call ourselves Christians, then why would we not be focusing on our faith as much as we can? That means attending Liturgy, that means connecting with students in a loving way, both in OCF and not. That means helping the community around us. That means having an active prayer life.

Do not be lukewarm, or you will be spat out. Do not be the student that only goes to church on holidays when home. Do not be the student that is too busy studying to make it to OCF or a volunteering event once in a while. Do not be the student that is too lazy to pray daily. Remember that we must take ownership and responsibility of our faith. We are not only Christians on Sunday. At every moment, and in every action we are representing our Christian faith to others. It is expected that we struggle, and with struggle comes sin. But in the wake of sin must come repentance. If we are truly Orthodox Christians, we aren't ever passive. We believe in constant salvation, and an ongoing attempt to join Christ in the afterlife. So as a graduating senior, my advice to college students is to own your faith, and own it now. I didn't make many true friends in my OCF until later on in college. Now, I never go to church alone. Find those who take the faith seriously, and stick by them. Your fellowship and steadfast nature will draw others to you.

Alex Kuvshinoff has been a Regional Leader on the OCF Student Leadership board for the last two years. He is a recent graduate of Fordham University, with a B.S. in Business Administration and Minor in History. He is set of be on staff at Ionian Village this summer, and will be starting work in NYC this September.

Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, LXVII:



The earth is a stepmother, O Heavenly Mother, and behaves toward us as a stepmother. She looks upon us as step-children, as strangers from afar, as adopted children -- until she makes us her slaves.

We labor for her day and night, and for this she pays us wages with her miserable possessions: sin, sickness, and death.

Whoever only lives by her bread, will never know satiety. Rather, the more he eats, the hungrier he feels. And the more he dances to her tune, the more he will be overcome by grief.

He is like a beast that falls into a deep pit and then digs ever lower and deeper in the earth in order to save himself. And even as he moves further away from salvation, he thinks that salvation is near. Truly, such are the sons of men, who toil hard over the earth, and assess the nearness of salvation on the basis of their toiling.

To what avail is your swimming in ashes, ever deeper and deeper? O sons of men, your salvation has been left behind you.

You say: "We need dig just a little bit deeper, and we shall come out into the light." But I say: "Just a little deeper into the earth, and you will be further from the light."

You say: "We need only complete certain tasks tomorrow and the day after, and the kingdom of goods will be con-structed." But I tell you: "All that you have constructed of earth, will crash down upon your head, and your tomorrow and day-after-tomorrow will again be only a painful lifting of your head beneath the ruins."

Your fathers used to mutter the same words of consolation to themselves, and they died off amid the ruins and amid the unfinished repairs.

You need ladders, and nothing other than ladders; so that you can climb out of the hole into which you have fallen, so that you can flee from the cold embrace of your stepmother.

A virgin is that ladder. She lights a heavenly candle in the midst of your darkness and shows the way. She is clairvoyant, and she knows that which you have forgotten. Alienated from earth, she has been befriended by heaven. Disrobed of dark-ness, she is clothed in light. Through her Heaven peers into us. Through her we can see heaven.

She is cautious with regard to your counsels; rectitude is in her mouth; heavenly wisdom is in her womb; a reverend flame is in her heart.

Out of her come the healer and the cure. From her thighs come the guide and the way.

She is not a stepmother but a mother, and does not promise her son more than she can give. Her giving is her promise, while the giving of the stepmother consists of promises.

The stepmother is earth, O Heavenly Mother, and she behaves toward us as a stepmother. With a black veil she conceals You from our eyes, so that we may not see You and think that You are dead. Therefore generation after generation snuggles up to the stepmother, and kisses her harsh hand.

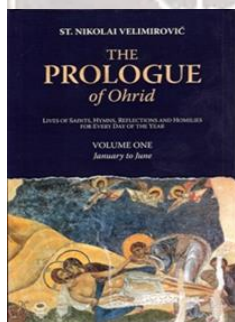
Flash Your face, O Mother, and the stepmother will flee, and the slaves will become sons.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LXVII:

II. The Realities of the Spiritual World The Church of Christ

The Church of Christ is One, Holy, Universal and Apostolic. She is herself a single spiritual body, whose head is Christ, and who has the one Holy Spirit abiding in her. The local parts of the Church are members of a single body of the Universal Church, and they, like branches of a single tree, are nourished by one and same sap from a single root. She is called holy because she is sanctified by the holy word, deeds, sacrifice and suffering of her founder, Jesus Christ, to which end He came in order to save human beings and lead them to holiness. The Church is called universal because she is not confined by place, not by time, nor by nation nor language. The communicates with all humanity. The Orthodox Church is called apostolic because the spirit, teaching and labors of the Apostles of Christ are entirely preserved in her.

+ St. Nicholas of Serbia, Catechesis



The Prologue of Ohrid: Lives of Saints, Hymns, Reflections and Homilies for Every Day of the Year

1. Saint Eudocimus

Eudocimus was born in Cappadocia of devout parents, Basil and Eudocia. At the time of the Emperor Theophilus (829-842 A.D.), Eudocimus was a young officer in the army. Even as an officer, he exerted all his effort to live according to the commandments of the Holy Gospel. Preserving his purity undefiled, he avoided conversing with any woman except his mother. He was merciful toward the unfortunate and needy, conscientious in reading holy books, and even more conscientious in his prayers to God. He avoided vain amusements and idle talk. "Amid the throngs and worldly vanity, he was a lily among thorns, and as gold in the fire." Because of his extraordinary virtues the emperor appointed him governor of Cappadocia. In this high position, Eudocimus strove to be righteous before God and men. By God's providence he died at an early age, in his thirty-third year. His relics were found to possess healing properties. An insane man touched his tomb, and was immediately healed; likewise a paralytic child stood up and was made whole. After eighteen months, his mother opened his coffin and found his body to be as though it were still alive, without any signs of decay or corruption. A wonderful fragrance arose from it. His relics were later

translated to Constantinople and buried in a new church dedicated to the Holy Theotokos, built by the parents of this righteous Eudocimus.

2. The Holy Female Martyr Julitia

Julitta was from Caesarea, in Cappadocia. When she had a dispute with her neighbor over some property, the neighbor went to the judge and denounced Julitta as a Christian, which at the time placed her outside of the protection of the law. St. Julitta gladly denied her property rather than her Faith. However, even after this the evil pagans did not leave her in peace, but tortured her, and finally burned her to death in the year 303 A.D. Thus, this follower of Christ sacrificed her estate and her body for the sake of the eternal salvation of her soul.

3. Saint Joseph of Arimathea

The noble Joseph, a wealthy man and member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, was secretly a follower of Christ. Now when it was evening, there came a certain rich man of Arimathea, Joseph by name, who was himself a disciple of Jesus (Matthew 27:57); Now after these things Joseph of Arimathea, because he was a disciple of Jesus (although for fear of the Jews a secret one), besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus (John 19:38). Joseph and Nicodemus removed the body of Christ from the Cross, and placed it in Joseph's sepulchre. As a result of this he was bound by the Jews and thrown into prison. There the resurrected Lord appeared to him and convinced him of His resurrection. The Jews later released Joseph from prison and banished him from his fatherland. He traveled throughout the world preaching the Gospel of Christ, and brought the good tidings [news] even to England, where he reposed in the Lord.

4. Saint John the Exarch

John was a distinguished Bulgarian priest and theologian during the time of Tsar [Emperor] Simeon (892-896 A.D.). He translated the Hexaemeron [Six Days] of St. Basil and the Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith of St. John Damascene into Slavonic. He died peacefully in the Lord.

Hymn of Praise *Saint Joseph of Arimathea*

Joseph, a wealthy and noble man,
Was not tempted concerning Christ the Crucified,
But when the sun darkened and the earth shook,
He, to Pilate, went and brought him news
That the Lord had died, the Giver of life;
And so the secret disciple became public.
And when the Revealed one was concealed, the concealed one came
out into the open,
Thus Joseph, the wise, in a day became famous.
With Nicodemus, the body of Christ he took,
And in his garden, in a new tomb, laid it.
The Jewish spies heard and reported it,
And in chains, the righteous Joseph they put.
In the dark prison, Joseph languished
While his Lord in hades shone forth.
Joseph pondered his memories of Christ,
Recalling His wondrous works,
And His miracles, sayings and prophecies many.
While near Him, he had stood in the presence of God:
But now all was dark, without and within.
Dark days, nights, evenings and mornings,
After the brilliant radiance of the shining sun!
Oh, desperate darkness, darker than hades!
But lo, suddenly in the dungeon it is dawn;

The Risen One appears to the fettered servant.
O Joseph, brave and noble,
Neither, concerning the Risen One, were you tempted.
Of the death of Christ, Pilate you informed,
And recognized and glorified the Risen One.
Let the land of Britain honorably glorify you,
For you sowed her first seed of salvation.

Reflection

Ascetics in the wilderness labor to cut off their own will and live according to the will of God. Some erroneously think that the hermit lives completely in isolation. No hermit thinks this. He lives in the company of God, His angels and the saints. Wherever a man's mind is, there also is his life. The mind of the hermit dwells among the greatest, most pure and most numerous company in which a man can possibly dwell. Abba Mark once reproached St. Arsenius the hermit: "For what reason do you flee from our company and from conversation with us?" Arsenius replied: "God knows that I love you all, but I cannot be with both God and man. In heaven, thousands, and thousands of thousands have but one will; but with men there are many and various wills. That is why I cannot leave God, and be with men."

Contemplation

To contemplate the punishment from God that befell Abimelech and the Shechemites (Judges 9):

1. How Abimelech, with the help of the men of Shechem, slew seventy of his brethren;
2. How Abimelech then slew the Shechemites, plowed their city under and sowed it with salt;
3. How, after many victories, Abimelech was killed by a woman who hurled a piece of a millstone onto his head from a tower;
4. How the curse of Jotham, the son of Gideon, came upon the Shechemites and Abimelech.

Homily About the last awaiting

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that you may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Peter 3:14).

Brethren, what is our last awaiting? In the night, we await the day, and in the day, we await the night; and again the day, and again the night. But this awaiting is not our last awaiting. Brethren, what is our last awaiting? In times of joy we tremble, waiting for sorrow; and in sorrow, we wait with hope for joy; and again sorrow, and again joy. But not even these awaitings are our last awaiting. Brethren, our last awaiting is the awaiting of the judgment of God. When the judgment of God comes--the Dreadful Day which burns like a furnace (Malachi 4:1)--then we receive all that we deserve; for some it will be a day that changes not into night, while for others it will be night that changes not into day; joy for some, without change into sorrow, and sorrow for others, without change into joy. Brethren, that is the last awaiting of the human race--whether we know it or not; whether we think about it or not.

Yet, you faithful should know this, and should think about it. Let this knowledge be the zenith of all your knowledge, and let this thought direct all your other thoughts. To the knowledge and contemplation of all this, add that which is most important: your diligence, that you may be found of Him in peace without spot and blameless [pure and blameless]. Be diligent to be pure in mind and in heart, blameless in your conscience and at peace with God. Only then will the last awaiting not terrify you with its unexpectedness, nor will it hurl you into the night without day, or into the sorrow without joy. As everything else in the life of the Lord Jesus was unexpected by man, so also His Second Coming will be unexpected--in power and glory. Unexpected was His birth of the All-holy Virgin; unexpected was His poverty; unexpected was His miracle-working, His every word, His humiliation and voluntary death, His Resurrection, His Ascension, His Church and the spreading of His Faith. His Second Coming too will be unexpected--a shock more fearful than all others.

O Lord, O righteous Judge, how shall we meet You, who are not clad in purity, in blamelessness or in peace? Help us! Help us--that we may prepare, as much as possible, for the dreadful encounter with You.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon

The All Consuming Love of God

Everyone will spend eternity in God's presence

According to Saint Gregory of Nyssa, heaven and hell are not about location, but about relationship. God is everywhere, and He did not create a heaven for some, and a hell for others. If we love God, His fire will be a comforting warmth, but if we choose not to have a relationship with Him, His fire will be as hell fire. We choose how we will experience the presence of God in the afterlife, and since God cannot be absent from anywhere, those who have chosen to ignore Him, will, nevertheless, be in His presence for all of eternity.

Saint Gregory, tells us that Paradise and Hell do not exist from God's point of view, but from man's point of view. It is all about man's choice and condition. According to him, heaven and hell are not two different locations. They are simply two different experiences of the same place.

Everyone will spend eternity in God's presence, but how we experience the Divine Presence will depend upon the condition of our soul. Those who have been transformed by the action and work of the Holy Spirit, will experience God as light and bliss. Those who have rejected God's love will experience it as pain and suffering. For the unbeliever and the unrepentant, their sins will not allow them to enjoy the Presence of God.

Upon Christ's Second Coming, everyone who has ever lived will see Him in His uncreated light, forever. For “those who worked good deeds in their lifetime will go towards the resurrection of life, while those who worked evil in their lifetime will go towards the resurrection of judgment (John.5:29)”. All will be separated at the moment of the final judgement, with the good experiencing paradise as exceedingly good, and radiant, while those who have rejected His love, and whose lives ended without repentance, will look upon Christ as hell, the “all-consuming fire” spoken of in Hebrews 12:29.

It is from Christ's Second Coming that the river of fire will flow forth. For the saints this river of fire will be a golden light, encompassing them as an eternal joy. Whereas, for the demons and the unrepentant, it will be as a burning hell fire. For this is the very reason we read in Luke 2:34, that Christ is “as the fall and the resurrection of many.”

“Paradise and hell are not two different places. (This version is an idolatrous concept.) They signify two different situations (ways), which originate from the same uncreated source, and are perceived by man as two, different experiences (Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlochos).”

For those who reject the healing that has been offered, Christ will be their hell, their separation from the eternal bliss. For the saints, Christ will be their resurrection into eternal life. This is why Saint John of the Ladder wrote that the uncreated light of Christ is “an all-consuming fire and an illuminating light”. This is why we say heaven and hell are not about location, they are about relationship. Heaven and Hell are within the same realm, which is in the presence of God.

“When in the furnace of the blazing flame, Thy holy and faithful Youths proved to be as in a cool, refreshing dew, then did they mystically portray from before that Thou wast to come from a Virgin whom Thy brightness would not burn. As for Thy coming the second time in Thy dread glory as our God, the wondrous Prophet and righteous man, great Daniel, clearly hath foretold, when he cried out and said: I beheld until the thrones were set in place, and the Judge sat for judgment; and then rushed forth the river of that fire, from the which may we be saved by their entreaties, O our Master Christ” (to the melody “Paradise of Eden”)



Daily Reflection

He Let You Hunger

“And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you... And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know; that he might make you know

that man does not live by bread alone, but that man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.”
(Deut 8: 2-4)



Just as He did back then, with His people for forty years in the wilderness, so does God “humble” those who belong to Him today. How does He do this? He periodically “lets you hunger,” and feeds you in ways “which you did not know” before. Thus God opens me up to the gift called “humility,” this road to true freedom, by walking me through the way of the cross. Humility enables me to walk as He did, through the pain and problems, rather than running from them in fear, resentment, or self-pity.

Today let me “remember all the way which the Lord God has led” me up until now, so that also today I might walk not alone, and not according to my own ways and means alone. Let me open up to His humility, which transforms painful experiences into valuable nudges toward growth, according to the transformative word “that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.” This Friday let me walk as He did many Fridays ago, as a lamb who was led.

Holy Orthodox Quotes

“The more exalted the soul is by comparison with the body, the more its salvation is to be preferred; the graver and more deadly its ruin.”

+ *St John of the Ladder*

1 Timothy 4:8-9

For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

Hebrews 2:1-3

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.† For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

Matthew 10:28

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Luke 6:45-49

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?† Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

Just as it is impossible for the eye to perceive sensible objects without the light of the sun, so the human intellect cannot engage in spiritual contemplation without the light of the Spirit. For physical light naturally illuminates the sense so that they may perceive physical bodies; while spiritual light illumines the intellect so that it can engage in contemplation and thus grasp what lies beyond the senses.

+ *St Maximus the Confessor, 500 Various Texts*

Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers

"Perfection in Love" by St. Augustine

What is perfection in love? Love your enemies in such a way that you would desire to make them your brothers ... For so did He love, Who hanging on the Cross, said ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’” (Luke 23:34)

Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity

St Nektarios of Aegina: Seek God Daily

“Seek God daily. But seek Him in your heart, not outside it. And when you find Him, stand with fear and trembling, like the Cherubim and the Seraphim, for your heart has become a throne of God. But in order to find God, become humble as dust before the Lord, for the Lord abhors the proud, whereas He visits those that are humble in heart, wherefore He says: “To whom will I look, but to him that is meek and humble in heart?”

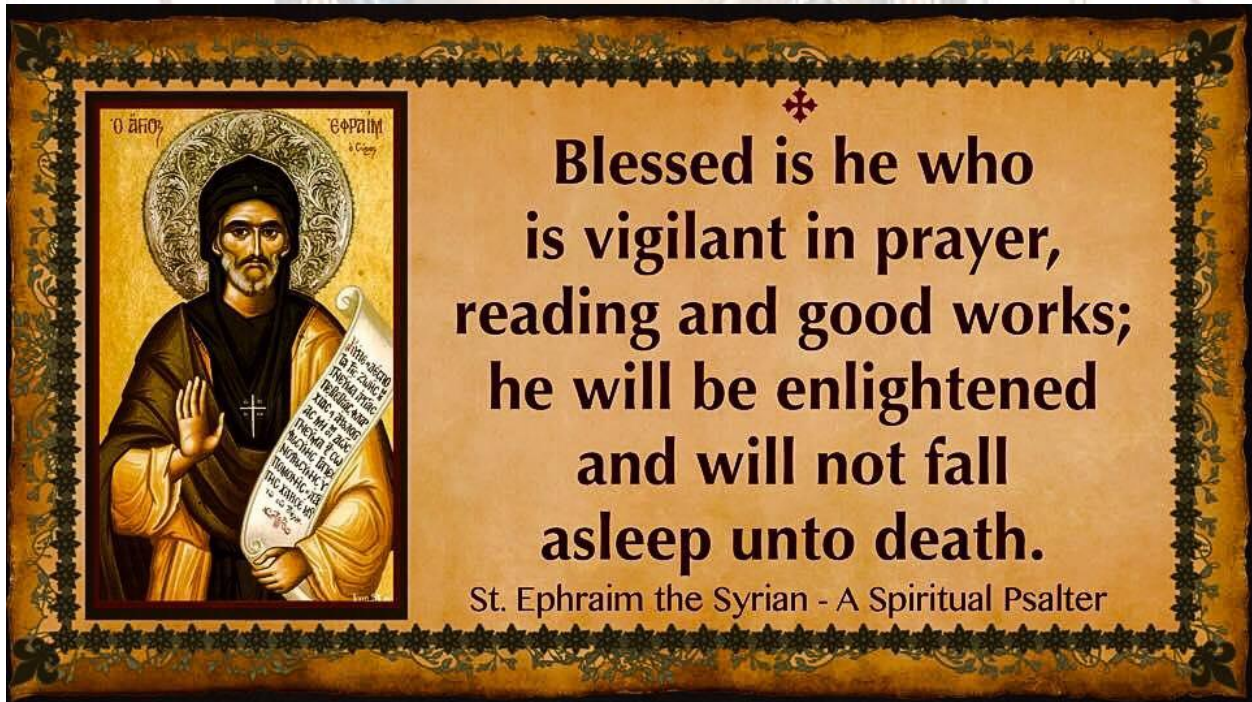
Collected Sayings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica

However, certain created beings are fallen beings. Certain angels first failed to preserve their dignity and later, as a result of the envy of these fallen angels, our forebears Adam and Eve also fell. This very same trait, envy, has put down its roots in us, too. Envy stops at nothing and shouts contradictions in God’s face all the time and everywhere.

Ancient Christian Wisdom

You know, of course, that your whole purpose at the moment is to change yourself inwardly. And so, corresponding to these inward changes and obeying the impulse that comes from them, external things must be changed as well.

. + St. Theophan the Recluse



JULY – 2016

Sunday Resurrection	Monday Holy Angels	Tuesday St. John the Baptist	Wednesday Most-Holy Theotokos	Thursday Holy Apostles	Friday Life-giving Cross	Saturday Departed
		.			1 Unmercenary Wonderworkers Cosmas & Damian 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	2 <i>19 June O.S.</i> <i>St. John Bp. Of S.F.</i> Robe of the Theotokos St. John, Bp. Of Shanghai & San Francisco 6:30pm Vespers
3 All Saints of America All Saints of Russia Martyr Hyacinth Relics Hieromartyr Philip, Metr. Of Moscow 9:40am Hours 9:45am Gen'l Confession 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	4 Galatian Icon St. Andrew of Crete Ven. Martha	5 Ekonomissa Icon RELICS VEN. SERGIUS OF RADONEZH VEN. ATHANASIOS OF MOUNT ATHOS 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study NA Grp Mtg.	6 Ven. Sisoës the Great Virgin Martyr Lucia	7 Blachemae Icon Ven. Thomas of Mt. Maleon Ven. Eudoxia	8 Kazan', Sitka-Kazan' Icons and Others Greatmartyr Procopius 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	9 Kolochskaya Icon Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Taormena 6:30pm Vespers
10 Konevskaya Icon 45 Martyrs at Nicopolis VEN. ANTHONY OF THE KIEV CAVES 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	11 End Ss. Peter & Paul Fast O.S. Greatmartyr Euphemia BL, Princess Olga	12 "Three Hands Icon" <i>29 June O.S. Ss. Peter & Paul</i> Martyrs Proclus & Hilary of Ancyra 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study. NA Grp Mtg.	13 "Axion Estin/Dostonio est'" Icon Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel Ven. Stephen Sabbaite	14 Apostle Aquila of the 70 Repose Ven. Nicodemus the Hagorite	15 Fish, Wine & Oil GREAT PRINCE VLADIMIR, EQUAL-TO-THE-APOSTLES, ENLIGHTENER OF THE RUSSIAN LANDS 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	16 Hieromartyr Athenogenes, Bp. Of Heracleopolis 6:30pm Vespers
17 Fathers of the 1 st Six Ecumenical Councils <i>4 July O.S. Royal Passionbearers</i> Royal Passionbearers Greatmartyr Marina (Margaret) 9:40 Hours 10:00 Divine Liturgy / Social	18 Nun Martyrs Gr. Duchess Elizabeth & Barbara	19 RELICS VEN. SERAPHIM OF SAROV 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study NA Grp Mtg.	20 Fish, Wine & Oil Abalatskaya Icon HOLY PROPHET ELIJAH	21 Armatia Icon Prophet Ezekiel Ven. Simeon of Emesa, Fool-for-Christ	22 Holy Myrrbearer Mary Magdalene, Equal-to-the-Apostles 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	23 Pochaev & Joy of All Who Sorrow Icons Martyrs Trophimus, Theophilus & Their Companions 6:30pm Vespers
24 Martyr Christina MARTYRS BORIS & GLEB. PASSIONBEARERS 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/ Social	25 Dormition of Righteous Anna, Mother of the Theotokos	26 Emvolon Icon ST. JACOB, ENLIGHTENER OF THE PEOPLES OF ALASKA 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study NA Grp Mtg.	27 GREATMARTYR & HEALER PANTELEIMON St. Clement, Bishop of Ochrid	28 Smolensk Hodigitria <i>156 July O.S. St. Vladimir</i> Apostles of the 70 Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon & Parmenas	29 Martyr Callinicus Virgin Martyr Seraphima 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	30 Apostles of the 70 Silas, Silvanus & their Companions 6:30pm Vespers
31 Forefeast Procession of the Life-giving Cross Righteous Eudocimus St. Germanus, Bp. Of Auxerre 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/ Social	What is the source of greatest joy in my life now? Have I begun to intentionally seek to be present in my life more often? Do I still live in my thoughts longing for life to begin 'tomorrow'? How much time do I waste in front of the TV, on the internet in a dull state of consciousness? Who in life helps me awaken? Who do I seek out in my life in order to have a dialogue from the heart about the search for God and what really matters? Do I have a spiritual confessor and guide and make regular confessions? Do I worship or sit as a spectator? – Dn. Stephen Muse, "Being bread."					