

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: Dean Inferrera



Sunday, June 18, 2017

Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23

Saints: Matthew 4:25-5:12

Tone 1

Epistle: Romans 2:10-16

Saints: Hebrews 11:33-12:2

2nd Sunday after Pentecost:

Synaxis of All Saints of North America (All Saints of Russia)

Martyr Leontius, and with him Martyrs Hypatius and Theodulus, at Tripoli in Syria (70-79). Ven. Leonty, Canonarch, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—14th c.). Ven. Leonty the Hagiorite (1605). The “BOGOLIUBSKAYA” Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos (1157).

Troparion – Tone 8

As the bountiful harvest of Your sowing of salvation, / The lands of North America offer to You, O Lord, all the saints who have shone in them. / By their prayers keep the Church and our land in abiding peace / Through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One.

Kontakion – Tone 3

Today the choir of Saints who were pleasing to God in the lands of North America / Now stands before us in the Church and invisibly prays to God for us. / With them the angels glorify Him, / And all the saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them; / And together they all pray for us to the Pre-Eternal God.



Synaxis of the Saints of North America

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Linda Dantinne, on her birthday, offered by her family.

Dean Inferrera, on his birthday offered by his family.

Juliana Inferrera, on her birthday, offered by her family.

Trinity, who was in an automobile accident, offered by her grandparents Sub-Deacon Edward & Holly Dawson.

Father Silouan, who is currently ill, offered by Trudy Ellmore.

Infant, newly-baptized Ivanna Parsells, daughter of Peter and Heather Parsells and granddaughter of Archpriest James Parsells, presently in neo-natal intensive care, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese NY/NJ.

In Memory of:

Christopher Dawson, 40 days memory eternal, offered by the Dawson Family.

Rev. Edward Ellmore, 40 days memory eternal, offered by Trudy and Phil Ellmore.

Panikhida:

Christopher Dawson, offered by the Dawson Family.

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, June 18th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy
11:30 am: Panikhida:
Christopher Dawson

Saturday, June 24th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 25th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy
12:30 pm: Parish Council
Meeting

Saturday, July 1st

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 2nd

9:40 am: Hours
9:45 am: General
Confession
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy
12:30 pm: Sisterhood
Meeting

Saturday, July 8th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 9th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors

*Dantinne Family,
Inferrera Family, Dawson
Family, Trudy & Phil
Ellmore*

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 1st Tone:

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee!
(Psalm 32:22)
vs. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just!
(Psalm 32:1)

Another, Tone 7 (Saints):

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.
(Psalm 115:6)

Epistle: Romans 2:10-16

Brethren, glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

Saints: Hebrews 11:33-12:2

Brethren, who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Alleluia in the 1st Tone:

God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me!
(Psalm 17:48)
vs. He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever.
(Psalm 17:51)

Another, Tone 1 (Saints):

Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, O you righteous!
(Psalm 31:11)

Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23

At that time, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed him. And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

Saints: Matthew 4:25-5:12

Great multitudes followed Him – from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan. And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



Synaxis of the Saints of North America

On the second Sunday after Pentecost, each local Orthodox Church commemorates all the saints, known and unknown, who have shone forth in its territory. Accordingly, the Orthodox Church in America remembers the saints of North America on this day.

Saints of all times, and in every country are seen as the fulfillment of God’s promise to redeem fallen humanity. Their example encourages us to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us” and to “run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). The saints of North America also teach us how we should live, and what we must expect to endure as Christians

Although it is a relatively young church, the Orthodox Church in America has produced saints in nearly all of the six major categories of saints: Apostles (and Equals of the Apostles); Martyrs (and Confessors); Prophets; Hierarchs; Monastic Saints; and the Righteous. Prophets, of course, lived in Old Testament times and predicted the coming of Christ.

The first Divine Liturgy in what is now American territory (northern latitude 58 degrees, 14 minutes, western longitude 141 degrees) was celebrated on July 20, 1741, the Feast of the Prophet Elias, aboard the ship Peter under the command of Vitus Bering. Hieromonk Hilarion Trusov and the priest Ignatius Kozirevsky served together on that occasion. Several years later, the Russian merchant Gregory I. Shelikov visited Valaam monastery, suggesting to the abbot that it would be desirable to send missionaries to Russian America.

On September 24, 1794, after a journey of 7,327 miles (the longest missionary journey in Orthodox history) and 293 days, a group of monks from Valaam arrived on Kodiak Island in Alaska. The mission was headed by Archimandrite Joasaph, and included Hieromonks Juvenal, Macarius, and Athanasius, the Hierodeacons Nectarius and Stephen, and the monks Herman and Joasaph. Saint Herman of Alaska (December 13, August 9), the last surviving member of the mission, fell asleep in the Lord in 1837.

Throughout the Church’s history, the seeds of faith have always been watered by the blood of the martyrs. The Protomartyr Juvenal was killed near Lake Iliamna by natives in 1799, thus becoming the first Orthodox Christian to shed his blood for Christ in the New World. In 1816, Saint Peter the Aleut was put to death by Spanish missionaries in California when he refused to convert to Roman Catholicism.

Missionary efforts continued in the nineteenth century, with outreach to the native peoples of Alaska. Two of the most prominent laborers in Christ’s Vineyard were Saint Innocent Veniaminov (March 31 and October 6) and Saint Jacob Netsvetov (July 26), who translated Orthodox services and books into the native languages. Father Jacob

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

Netsvetev died in Sitka in 1864 after a life of devoted service to the Church. Father John Veniaminov, after his wife’s death, received monastic tonsure with the name Innocent. He died in 1879 as the Metropolitan of Moscow.

As the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, an event of enormous significance for the North American Church took place. On March 25, 1891, Bishop Vladimir went to Minneapolis to receive Saint Alexis Toth (May 7) and 361 of his parishioners into the Orthodox Church. This was the beginning of the return of many Uniates to Orthodoxy.

Saint Tikhon (Belavin), the future Patriarch of Moscow (April 7, October 9), came to America as bishop of the diocese of the Aleutians and Alaska in September 1898. As the only Orthodox bishop on the continent, Saint Tikhon traveled extensively throughout North America in order to minister to his widely scattered and diverse flock. He realized that the local church here could not be a permanent extension of the Russian Church. Therefore, he focused his efforts on giving the American Church a diocesan and parish structure which would help it mature and grow.

Saint Tikhon returned to Russia in 1907, and was elected as Patriarch of Moscow ten years later. He died in 1925, and for many years his exact burial place remained unknown. Saint Tikhon’s grave was discovered on February 22, 1992 in the smaller cathedral of Our Lady of the Don in the Don Monastery when a fire made renovation of the church necessary.

Saint Raphael of Brooklyn (February 27) was the first Orthodox bishop to be consecrated in North America. Archimandrite Raphael Hawaweeny was consecrated by Bishop Tikhon and Bishop Innocent (Pustynsky) at Saint Nicholas Cathedral in New York on March 13, 1904. As Bishop of Brooklyn, Saint Raphael was a trusted and capable assistant to Saint Tikhon in his Archpastoral ministry. Saint Raphael reposed on February 27, 1915.

The first All American Council took place March 5-7, 1907 at Mayfield, PA, and the main topic was “How to expand the mission.” Guidelines and directions for missionary activity, and statutes for the administrative structure of parishes were also set forth.

In the twentieth century, in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, countless men, women, and children received the crown of martyrdom rather than renounce Christ. Saints John Kochurov (October 31) and Alexander Hotovitzky (December 4 and August 7) both served the Church in North America before going back to Russia. Saint John became the first clergyman to be martyred in Russia on October 31, 1917 in Saint Petersburg. Saint Alexander Hotovitzky, who served in America until 1914, was killed in 1937.

In addition to the saints listed above, we also honor those saints who are known only to God, and have not been recognized officially by the Church. As we contemplate the lives of these saints, let us remember that we are also called by God to a life of holiness.



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:

OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com ; reader.charles@hotmail.com or rsub-deacon.vlashi@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 next meeting of the Parish Council will be next week Sunday June 25th after coffee hour.

[The next meeting of the Sisterhood of the Protection of the Mother of God will be held on Sunday July 2nd after coffee hour.](#)



NY/NJ Diocese News

Archbishop Michael asks all clergy to submit names of Senior High Schoolers who would be good candidates for Serv-X-Treme. All names must be submitted by the end of June. Here is a link to info on the conference: <https://www.iocc.org/take-action/serv-x-treme>

CONGRATULATIONS are extended to:

Archpriest Paul and Matushka Barbara Kucynda, who celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, June 11. May God continue to grant them a prosperous and peaceful life, good health and salvation, visitation and good hastening in all things, and may He protect and preserve them for many, blessed years! "Mnogaya Lyeta!"



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

Planting Grant Missions: “Out of the Nest, Time to Fly”

It is the stated intention of the Orthodox Church in America’s Church Planting Grant Program to provide financial assistance to enable priests in fledgling missions to serve full-time. And according to Priest Andrew Cuneo, “the happy result of this for Saint Katherine Mission is that it meant the parishioners could be full time, too.

“I give every ounce of credit for the growth, warmth, and fervent prayer of this community to the parishioners themselves,” says Father Andrew, the mission’s founding priest. “We used to have 50-60 folks at Sunday Liturgy when our Planting Grant began in 2014; we now average near 100. We used to hold only two services a week; we now have a holy service every day but

Monday.”

Receiving a Planting Grant offers a mission critical income, for certain; however, adds Father Andrew, “there is a structure that has been there every year of the Grant.

“The Diocese of the West nurtures all the missions in their Mission Deanery through specific mentorship, annual retreats, and tactical advice for attainable growth,” Father Andrew continued. “The OCA Department of Evangelization also plays a role each step of the way. Every month, our mission is asked, ‘What did we do for growth? How did we pray for it? How are you as a mission building leadership, stewardship, a building fund, and outreach? Reporting numbers every month about all services, attendance, sacraments, visitors, donations, and activities encourages us to ask the right questions and monitor the real results.”

One bit of crucial data is that within north San Diego County, Saint Katherine’s is the only English-speaking Orthodox Church for over 300,000 residents.

“Just as a Bishop’s care concerns all the population of his diocese, so too does a mission open each day allow for anyone to come in for an encounter with a community that is present,” Father Andrew noted. “Dr. Albert Rossi always advised us to say ‘yes’—yes to God, yes to every opportunity to minister and share God’s healing Gospel. So the past three years of on the grant have presented a string of opportunities: a retired army ranger drops in and asks, can you pray for my deceased brother? Yes. Others ask, can you bless my house? My car? My office? My deployment? Yes. Can you meet with my co-worker’s mother who has cancer? Yes. Someone calls from another state asking, can you visit my mother, a 45-minute drive away? She is dying. Yes. Can you talk to the OCF about relationships? Yes. Can you speak on C. S. Lewis at a Protestant church Friday night? Yes.”

Father Andrew added that he’ll never forget the stranger who walked up to him in Target and said, “my husband is abusing me. I’ve left home. Can you simply pray for me?”

“Another yes,” Father Andrew said. “The Planting Grant makes all of this possible, for the priest and parishioners can thus serve myriad needs. Let us never forget that the needs and opportunities are real.”

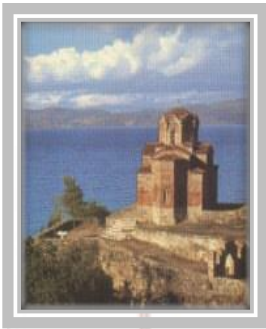
Father Andrew added that one of the most satisfying results of the Planting Grant has been the way it enables active parishioners to want more.

“They taste and experience a vital Orthodoxy and they want to pursue their salvation more zealously,” he said. “They catapult around the world to visit Mt. Athos, Russia, and other traditionally Orthodox lands.”

One parishioner commented, “the local growth the grant has facilitated has left us not just reading books about Saint Paisios and Saint Nektarios, but wanting to venerate their relics. We want to walk where they walked and pray where they prayed. And we want to build a church like the churches we see.”

After receiving the Planting Grant for three years, Saint Katherine’s now labors in God’s good time no longer to be a mission, but a parish.

“It’s time for us to leave the nest, to acknowledge the great gift the Planting Grant has been, and to fly with our own wings,” Father Andrew concluded. “We in turn want to be a parish in the coming years that supports another new mission. If God, through the prayers of Saint Katherine, honors this wish, then nothing will stop it. Please pray for us.”



Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, XI:

Once I bound myself to You, my love, all other bonds broke.

I see a swallow distraught over its demolished nest, and I say: "I am not bound to my nest."

I see a son mourning for his father, and I say: "I am not bound to my parents."

I see a fish expiring as soon as it is taken out of the water, and I say: "That is me! If they take me out of Your embrace, I shall die in seconds—like a fish tossed onto the sand."

Yet how could I have plunged so far into You, with no way back, and lived, if I had not been in You before? Truly, I was in You from Your first awakening, because I sense that You are my home.

Eternity exists in eternity just as duration exists in time. In one eternity, O Lord, You were in ineffable sameness and Your Vespereal blessedness. At that time Your hypostases were the truth within You, for it was impossible for them not to be in You. But they did not recognize one another, for they were unconscious of their diversity. In a second eternity You were in Your maternal blessedness, and the three hypostases recognized themselves as such.

The Father was not before the Son, nor was the Son before the Father, nor was the All-Holy Spirit before or after the Father and the Son. As a man while waking suddenly opens both eyes at the same time, so did the three hypostases within You suddenly open at the same time. There is no Father without the Son and no Son without the Holy Spirit.

When I lie beside my lake and sleep unconsciously, neither the power of consciousness, nor desire, nor action, die within me — rather they all flow into one blessed, nirvana-like, indistinguishable unity.

When the sun pours out its gold over the lake, I awaken not as a nirvana-like unity but as a triunity of consciousness, desire, and action.

This is Your history in my soul, O Lord, interpreter of my life. Is not the history of my soul the interpreter of the history of everything created, everything divided and everything united? And of You as well, my Homeland, my soul is—forgive me, O Lord — the interpreter of You.

O my Homeland, save me from the assaults of foreigners upon me.

O my Light, chase the darkness out of my blood.

O my Life, burn up all the larvae of death in my soul and my body.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, CXI:

III. Us and Our Neighbors

Judging

If you have the sinful habit of judging your neighbor, then whenever you judge someone make three prostrations that day with this prayer: "Save, O Lord, and have mercy on him (whom I have judged) and by his prayers, have mercy on me, a sinner." Do this every time you judge someone. If you do this, God will see your sincerity and will deliver you from this sinful habit forever. And if you never judge anyone, then God will never judge you. In this way you will even receive salvation.

Priest-confessor Sergei Pravdolubov



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon

The Spiritual Dust Bowl

Encountering drought in one’s soul

Like much of the country, Washington State experienced a major drought a few years ago. When most people think of Seattle, they think of rain, lots of rain. This year, during a seven month period, we had a total of four feet of rain. The Pacific Northwest broke a hundred and twenty-two year record for rain, in fact. Anyone who would choose to live in the Puget Sound region, better like rain, we tell our visitors. We of the Puget Sound love lush green forests, and rushing streams. We love our mountains, snowcapped year round. We love the mist that rises over our lakes and rivers, and we love our foggy autumn days. We love our rain!

Drought has had a significant impact on whole civilizations, even being responsible for the total abandonment of great cities, now buried beneath the sands of time. The Great Dust Bowl led to the mass migration of our own people, as farms and towns were gobbled up by dust storms, which had a devastating impact on the lives of thousands of families, in the twenties and thirties.

Perhaps this is a good time to take a look at another type of drought, one that impacts the souls of believers. Periods of spiritual dryness come to all of us, and just as the earth is impacted, with the death of plants and animals, so too can this spiritual drought bring death to the soul.

The image of the nineteenth century “rainmaker” comes to my mind, when traveling entrepreneurs managed to garner sums of money from local townspeople and farmers, with the promise of “making rain”. The desperate locals would fork over their remaining meager savings in the hopes of bringing the much needed rain for their crops, and dried up wells.

During periods of spiritual dryness, people tend to look in all the wrong directions, in a desperate attempt to quench their thirst for the meaning of life. Trying to fill a spiritual void, they look to entertainment, material goods, and worldly abandon, hoping to quench the drought they sense has taken hold of them. Like the farmers and townspeople of the Dust Bowl, they pay money to the “rainmakers” of pop music, entertainment, and material goods, all in a desperate attempt to find meaning to their lives, all the while ignoring the ocean of Living Water that resides within



Daily Reflection

Thinking About “Faith vs. Works”

“...But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there

is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus.” (Rom 3: 21-26)



...Say what?! This is one of the many complicated passages in St. Paul, dealing with the whole issue of “justification by faith” in Jesus Christ, rather than by “works” according to The Law. Let me suggest that we run into problems when we think about the question – Are we “justified” by faith or by works? – particularly when we just “think” about it. Because it is confusing when we just theorize about it, rather than try it.

But when I really try faith, – and by “faith” I mean really letting God be God in my life, rather than playing God myself, – I do receive God’s “grace as a gift,” which begins to make sense to me, of this whole issue. What happens in “faith” is that God’s “grace” or divine energies “rub off” on me, in a real, lived connection with Him, just like a relationship with any other living being influences me. This is not just a pleasant theory, but a lived experience. God’s divine energies restore in me His kind of effectiveness and efficiency, which enable me to proceed with my “vocation,” or the way that I, specifically, am to work and be in this world, according to God’s purpose and vision for me. So let me try faith today, and let God in, that I may be liberated from the various road-blocks of self-reliance and self-sufficiency, like anxiety and self-doubt, which arise from attempting to play God in my life. That divine

role always proves too heavy for my imperfect, not-divine shoulders, already burdened with “former sins,” which I know too well, so I get blocked with anxiety and self-doubt. But God’s grace, which “passes over former sins,” taken on and overcome in His Son, instills in me His “righteousness,” so I can do the next “right” thing, baby-step by baby-step, in Him. Lord, let me let You in today, because I can’t, and don’t have to, do this on my own. Glory be to You.

Holy Orthodox Quotes

“In my pride I dared to seek that which no one can find unless practices humility.”

- St. Augustine

1 Peter 5:5-7 (OSB)

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” † Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

Apt silence bridles anger; moderation in food bridles mindless desire; and the single-phrased Jesus Prayer bridles unruly thought.

- St. Elijah the Priest, Gnostic Anthology

Ancient Christian Wisdom

Why does the Lord allow people to be poor? For the same reason, amongst others, that He does not make you righteous all at once according to your wish. God might have made all men well off, even rich; but then a great forgetfulness of God would have arisen, and pride, envy, and so forth, would have increased. And you would have thought too highly of yourself had the Lord made you soon righteous. But as sin humbles you, showing you your great infirmity, impurity, and constant need of God and His grace, so likewise the poor man is humbled by poverty and his need of other people. If the poor were to be enriched, many of them would forget God and their benefactors, would ruin their souls in the luxury of this world. So destructive are riches, and so do they blind the spiritual vision! They make the heart gross and ungrateful!

+ St. John of Kronstadt

Wisdom of the Church Fathers

"Thoughts are like airplanes flying in the air. If you ignore them, there is no problem. If you pay attention to them, you create an airport inside your head and permit them to land!"

Saint Paisios the Athonite
(1924-1994)

Orthodox Quote of the Day

- Geronda, don't one's surroundings help in the spiritual struggle? -Yes, they do, but sometimes one can live among Saints and still make no progress. Was there ever a better opportunity than that given to Judas, who was always with Christ? Judas had neither humility nor a good disposition.

**Elder Paisios of Mount Athos
Spiritual Counsels Vol. II Spiritual Awakening 108**