

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, May 28, 2017**

Gospel: John 17:1-13

**Tone 6**

Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

## *7th Sunday of Pascha: Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council*

Afterfeast of Ascension. St. Nicetas, Bishop of Chalcedon (9th c.). St. Ignatii (Ignatius), Bishop and Wonderworker of Rostov (1288). St. Eutychius, Bishop of Melitene (1st c.). Martyr Heliconis of Thessalonica (244). Hieromartyr Helladius, Bishop in the East (6th-7th c.). St. Germanus (Germaine, Herman), Bishop of Paris (576).

### **Troparion – Tone 8**

*You are most glorious, O Christ our God! / You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth! / Through them you have guided us to the true faith! / O greatly Compassionate One, glory to You!*

### **Kontakion – Tone 8**

*The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established one faith for the Church. / Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology, / It defines and glorifies the great mystery of Orthodoxy!*



*Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council*

### **Prayer Requests**

#### **For Health of:**

**Gabrielle Stefy**, on her birthday, offered by her grandmother Lore Stefy.

**Linda & Paul Jankowski**, on their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary (May 30), offered buy their family.

**MaryAnn Kuzemchak**, offered by her husband Bill Kuzemchak and her sons.

#### **In Memory of:**

**Marianna Stefy**, offered by her mother-in-law Lore Stefy.

Our father **Risley**, offered by Linda and Richard Dantine

### **Orthodox Quote of the Day**

Acts of charity, almsgiving and all the external good works do not suppress the arrogance of the heart; but noetic meditation, the labor of repentance, contrition and humility--these humble the proud mind.

**Elder Joseph the Hesychast**

### *Liturgical Schedule*

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

9:30 am: No Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>**

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

#### **Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>**

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

#### **Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>**

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

### *Bulletin Sponsors*

*Lore Stefy; Jankowski Family; Bill Kuzemchak & Family; Linda & Richard Dantinne*

### *Readings:*

#### **The Prokeimenon in the 1<sup>st</sup> Tone:**

Blessed art thou, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name forever! (*Song of the three Holy Children, vs. 3*)  
vs. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us!  
(*Song of the three Holy Children, vs. 4*)

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#### **Epistle:** Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

**In the first book,** O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." And when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." Then they returned from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away.

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#### **Alleluia in the 1<sup>st</sup> Tone:**

The Lord, the God of gods, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. (*Psalms 49:1*)  
vs. Gather to Me, My venerable ones, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice!  
(*Psalms 49:5*)

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#### **Gospel:** John 17:1-13

**At that time,** Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made. "I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine;

all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.”



### *Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council*

On the seventh Sunday of Pascha, we commemorate the holy God-bearing Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

The Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council has been celebrated by the Church of Christ from ancient times. The Lord Jesus Christ left the Church a great promise, “I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18). Although the Church of Christ on earth will pass through difficult struggles with the Enemy of salvation, it will emerge victorious. The holy martyrs bore witness to the truth of the Savior’s words, enduring suffering and death for confessing Christ, but the persecutor’s sword is shattered by the Cross of Christ.

Persecution of Christians ceased during the fourth century, but heresies arose within the Church itself. One of the most pernicious of these heresies was Arianism. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, was a man of immense pride and ambition. In denying the divine nature of Jesus Christ and His equality with God the Father, Arius falsely taught that the Savior is not consubstantial with the Father, but is only a created being.

A local Council, convened with Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria presiding, condemned the false teachings of Arius. However, Arius would not submit to the authority of the Church. He wrote to many bishops, denouncing the decrees of the local Council. He spread his false teaching throughout the East, receiving support from certain Eastern bishops.

Investigating these dissensions, the holy emperor Constantine (May 21) consulted Bishop Hosius of Cordova (Aug. 27), who assured him that the heresy of Arius was directed against the most fundamental dogma of Christ’s Church, and so he decided to convene an Ecumenical Council. In 325, 318 bishops representing Christian Churches from various lands gathered together at Nicea.

Among the assembled bishops were many confessors who had suffered during the persecutions, and who bore the marks of torture upon their bodies. Also participating in the Council were several great luminaries of the Church: Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia (December 6 and May 9), Saint Spyridon, Bishop of Tremithos (December 12), and others venerated by the Church as holy Fathers.

With Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria came his deacon, Athanasius (who later became Patriarch of Alexandria (May 2 and January 18). He is called “the Great,” for he was a zealous champion for the purity of Orthodoxy. In the Sixth Ode of the Canon for today’s Feast, he is referred to as “the thirteenth Apostle.”

The emperor Constantine presided over the sessions of the Council. In his speech, responding to the welcome by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, he said, “God has helped me cast down the impious might of the persecutors, but more distressful for me than any blood spilled in battle is for a soldier, is the internal strife in the Church of God, for it is more ruinous.”

Arius, with seventeen bishops among his supporters, remained arrogant, but his teaching was repudiated and he was excommunicated from the Church. In his speech, the holy deacon Athanasius conclusively refuted the blasphemous opinions of Arius. The heresiarch Arius is depicted in iconography sitting on Satan’s knees, or in the mouth of the Beast of the Deep (Rev. 13).

The Fathers of the Council declined to accept a Symbol of Faith (Creed) proposed by the Arians. Instead, they affirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith. Saint Constantine asked the Council to insert into the text of the Symbol of Faith the word “consubstantial,” which he had heard in the speeches of the bishops. The Fathers of the Council unanimously accepted this suggestion.

In the Nicene Creed, the holy Fathers set forth and confirmed the Apostolic teachings about Christ’s divine nature. The heresy of Arius was exposed and repudiated as an error of haughty reason. After resolving this chief dogmatic question, the Council also issued Twelve Canons on questions of churchly administration and discipline. Also decided was the date for the celebration of Holy Pascha. By decision of the Council, Holy Pascha should not be celebrated by Christians on the same day with the Jewish Passover, but on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the vernal equinox (which occurred on March 22 in 325).



**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](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com) ; [reader.charles@hotmail.com](mailto:reader.charles@hotmail.com) or [rsub-deacon.vlashi@outlook.com](mailto: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*

Church School schedule update: There will be no 9:30 Sunday School class this Sunday, May 28th. There will be a 9:30 class on Sunday June 5th. Other classes will meet as usual. Our last Sunday School meeting this school year will be on Sunday June 11th.

Enjoy your summer vacation!

### *NY/NJ Diocese News*

#### **MUSIC WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN**



**Music Workshop for Children** will be sponsored by the Commission on Liturgical Music [CoLM] on **10 June 2017 in Sea Cliff NY**. The workshop is appropriate for younger school age children through teens, however adults are encouraged to attend, too! The Divine Liturgy is the most often attended and well-known church service. During the workshop, children will have an opportunity to deepen their understanding of Orthodox worship and allow them to participate more fully in the Divine Liturgy. Through singing, discussion, and activities, participants will learn about the service and become familiar with basic musical concepts.

#### **Congratulations to:**

**Archpriest John Nehrebecki**, awarded the miter, by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, for 65 years of "exemplary priestly service in the Church of God," on Sunday, May 21, 2017, at Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus NJ.

**Mitred Archpriest John and Matushka Eugenia Nehrebecki**, celebrating their 65th Wedding Anniversary on Monday, May 22, 2017. The anniversary was marked with a celebration at Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus, NJ on Sunday, May 21.

#### **Canonical Release:**

**Archpriest Alexander Ioukliaevskikh**, at his own request, has been transferred from the Diocese of New York and New Jersey and the omophorion of His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, to the omophorion of His Beatitude, Metropolitan TIKHON, and granted a Canonical Release by His Beatitude from the Orthodox Church in America to the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A., and the omophorion of His Grace, Bishop Gregory of Nyssa, effective May 18, 2017.



***Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News***  
**113th Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon’s Monastery opened Friday, May 26**

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon will preside at the 113th Annual Pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, which officially opens on Friday, May 26, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. with the greeting of the Hawaiian Myrrh Streaming Icon of the Iveron Mother of God at the entrance arch. Vespers and Matins will follow at 4:00 p.m. in the Monastery Church of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk. The icon will be available for veneration throughout the Pilgrimage, which formally ends on Memorial Day—Monday, May 29.

Metropolitan Tikhon, President of Saint Tikhon’s Seminary, will preside at the school’s 75th annual Commencement on Saturday, May 27. The day will open with the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the monastery church at 9:00 a.m., followed by a meal in the dining hall. Commencement Exercises will begin at 1:00 p.m.

At the invitation of Metropolitan Tikhon, His Grace, Bishop Thomas of the Diocese of Charleston, Oakland, and the Mid-Atlantic of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America will deliver the commencement address.] The day will close with the celebration of the Resurrection Vigil at 4:00 p.m., followed by dinner for all pilgrims in the dining hall.

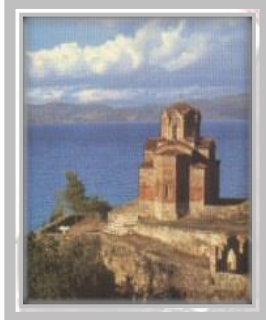
The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 28, followed by a meal for all pilgrims in the dining hall. Vespers and Matins will be celebrated at 4:00 p.m.

On Memorial Day — Monday, May 29 — the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in the Monastery Church at 7:30 a.m. The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m., followed by a Panikhida for Veterans, at All Saints Bell Tower at 12:15 p.m. The Akathistos Hymn to Saint Alexis will be celebrated in the monastery church at 1:30 p.m. The Molieben to the Most Holy Theotokos with the Anointing of the Sick, Infirm and All Pilgrims will be celebrated at the monastery bell tower at 2:30 p.m. The pilgrimage will close with the celebration of Vespers and Matins at 4:00 p.m.

Concurrent with the Pilgrimage, the Patriarch Tikhon Russian-American Music Institute [PaTRAM] will hold its Memorial Day Conductors’ and Singers’ Workshop at Saint Tikhon’s. Conference participants will sing the liturgical responses during the Pilgrimage.

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***Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, VIII:***



*Worlds swarm* around You, like bees around a cherry tree in blossom. One world pushes the other aside; one contests the patrimony of the other; one looks upon the other as an intruder in his home. All claim a greater right to You than You Yourself do.

From the effusion of Your fullness swarms are nourished, O inexhaustible Sweetness. All overeat, and all go away hungry.

Of all the swarms the human swarm leaves the most hungry. Not because You did not have food for men, O Master, but because they fail to recognize their nourishment, and so they contend with caterpillars for the same foliage.

Before all creatures, and before all time and sorrow. You, O Lord, formed man in Your heart. You conceived of man first, even though You manifested him last in the rosaries of creation—even as a gardener thinks about the blooming of a rose all the time he is digging and planting the dry rose stems -even as a builder experiences the joy of the domes while planning a church, even though he builds them last.

You gave birth to man in Your heart, before You began creating.

Help my mortal tongue to name this man, this radiance of Your glory, this song of Your blessedness. Should I call him the Ultimate Man? For just as He was contained in Your heart, so also was all the manifested world, including man and the heralds of man, contained in His mind.

And no one knows the Father except the Son, nor does anyone know the Son except the Father.<sup>1</sup> You were like nirvana," O Lord, until the Son was conceived within You, You were without number or name.

How shall I magnify You in the midst of a swarm of hungry caterpillars, which one wind blows onto the blossoming cherry tree and another blows off, and whose entire lifetime is spent between two winds?

O Lord, my dream day and night, help me to magnify You, so that nothing may become great in my heart except You.

Let all creatures magnify You, O Lord, lest they make themselves great instead of You.

Truly, You are exceedingly great, O Lord, would that all our hymns could make You greater!

Even when all the swarms of insects are blown off the blossoming cherry tree, the cherry tree remains the same in its majesty and vernal beauty.

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*Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, CVIII:*

**III. Us and Our Neighbors**

**Judging**

To judge sins is the business of one who is sinless, but who is sinless except God? Whoever thinks about the multitude of his own sins in his heart never wants to make the sins of others a topic of conversation. To judge a man who has gone astray is a sign of pride, and God resists the proud. On the other hand, one who every hour prepares himself to give answer for his own sins will not quickly lift up his head to examine the mistakes of others.

**St. Gennadius of Constantinople, The Golden Chain, 53-55**



*The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon*

**Unbelief**

*The ultimate sickness*

Humankind’s ultimate sickness is that of unbelief. This world is the place of preparation for our life in eternity, the place where we are prepared for the Kingdom that is to come. Within this world, Our Lord Jesus Christ established a hospital in which the medicine for the cure of our sickness is available, and this hospital of the soul is none other than the Church.

This world does not provide the medicine for that which ails us, for the only medicine that can heal us, is Christ Himself. If we are unwilling to receive this medicine, we will never be healed, and will never know the joys of the eternal Kingdom that awaits us. This illness that awaits a cure is unbelief, and this unbelief is based on our failure to avail ourselves to the medicine that is abundantly available within the life of the Church.

Belief comes as a free gift from a God Who “so love us that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him, will have eternal life (John 3:16)”. All we need to do is cooperate with God’s grace, and unbelief will disappear.

When we receive the Word of God into our heart, we, like the Apostle Thomas, will have touched His wounds, and will know the Lord, personally. When we confess our sins, and receive Christ into our life, we will have thrust our hand into His side, and we will believe. Unbelief, at this very moment in time, will have no place to reside in our heart, and like the Apostle Thomas, we will know the peace that comes with a life in Christ.



*Daily Reflection*

**Everyone has a “Place”**



“Let not your heart(s) be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms/dwelling-places (μοναὶ πολλαί); if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you (ὅτι πορεύομαι ἐτοιμάσαι τόπον ὑμῖν;)? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.’ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me...’” (Jn 14: 1-6)

In Christ, nobody is excluded. He prepares a “place” for all of us, even the misfits. This is because in Him, all of humanity is taken on and redeemed, regardless of social status, marital status, gender, race, nationality, and so on. He is the one “Way,” but there are many “ways” of living in Him, according to our various, even untraditional, vocations. And by “untraditional vocations” I mean those that don’t seem to have a “place” in our inherited social structure; like being female and single beyond a certain age, or being divorced, or a single parent, or compelled to work on weekends and not being able to make it to church.

So today, if we find ourselves “not fitting” in any box and asking, with Thomas, “How can we know the way?” – let’s be reminded of the Lord’s life-giving, life-affirming words, to all of us without exception: “Let not your hearts be troubled... I go and prepare a place for you... I am the way...” O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, please be my Way this sunny morning. Amen!

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*Holy Orthodox Quotes*

"Guard your mind from self-praise and flee a high opinion of yourself."

- St. Mark the Ascetic

**Romans 12:16**

Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

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"We must always remember that we are not condemned for the multitude of our evils, but because we do not want to repent."

- St. Mark the Ascetic

**2 Peter 3:9 (OSB)**

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.†

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*The Philokalia: Daily Readings*

The three most comprehensive virtues of the soul are prayer, silence and fasting. Thus you should refresh yourself with the contemplation of created realities when you relax from prayer; with conversation about the life of virtue when you relax from silence; and with such food as is permitted when you relax from fasting.

- St Elijah the Priest, Gnostic Anthology

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*Ancient Christian Wisdom*

Every Christian should find for himself the imperative and incentive to become holy. If you live without struggle and without hope of becoming holy, then you are Christians only in name and not in essence. But without holiness, no one shall see the Lord, that is to say they will not attain eternal blessedness. It is a trustworthy saying that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (I Tim. 1:15). But we deceive ourselves if we think that we are saved while remaining sinners. Christ saves those sinners by giving them the means to become saints.

+ St. Philaret of Moscow

This is the devil's work: he wants to see us in sorrow so that he may rejoice. But why should we allow the devil to do his work? Is joy not better than sorrow? Is love not better than malice?

+ St. Paisios

*Wisdom of the Church Fathers*

"There is no passion, no sin for which the Lives of the Saints do not show how the passion or sin in question in conquered, mortified, and uprooted".

**Saint Justin of Celie (Popovich)  
(1894-1979)**

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"So every time you fall, get up again and at once seek forgiveness. Don't hide sorrow in your heart, because sorrow and despondency are the joy of the evil one..."

**Saint Joseph the Hesychast**

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*Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity*

**Fr Alexander Elchaninov: Our Lives With God**

“Our continual mistake is that we do not concentrate upon the present day, the actual hour, of our life; we live in the past or in the future; we are continually expecting the coming of some special moment when our life will unfold itself in its full significance. And we do not notice that life is owing like water through our fingers, sifting like precious grain from a loosely fastened bag.

Constantly, each day, each hour, God is sending us people, circumstances, tasks, which should mark the beginning of our renewal; yet we pay them no attention, and thus continually we resist God's will for us. Indeed, how can God help us? Only by sending us in our daily life certain people, and certain coincidences of circumstance. If we accepted every hour of our life as the hour of God's will for us, as the decisive, most important, unique hour of our life – what sources of joy, love, strength, as yet hidden from us, would spring from the depths of our soul!

Let us then be serious in our attitude towards each person we meet in our life, towards every opportunity of performing a good deed; be sure that you will then fill God's will for you in these very circumstances, on that very day, in that very hour.”

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*Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers*

**"The Spirit of Repentance" by St. Anthony the Great**

Pride is a sickness of the soul apart from the body; so also are boastfulness, envy, hatred, impatience, sloth, and the rest. But if the soul gives itself to God wholeheartedly, God has mercy upon it and gives it the Spirit of Repentance, which testifies to it about each sin, that it may not again draw near to them; and shows it those who rise up against it and seek to prevent it separating itself from them, contending with it greatly that it may not abide in repentance. But if it endures and obeys the Spirit which counsels it to repentance, suddenly the Creator had mercy on the weariness of its repentance, and seeing its bodily toils, in much prayer and fasting and supplication and learning of the words of God, in renunciation of the world, in humility and tears and perseverance in contrition, then the merciful God, seeing its toil and submission, has pity upon it and delivers it.