



THE FORERUNNER

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Orthodox Church O.C.A.

420 Laura Street

Philipsburg, PA 16866

(814) 342-2011

<http://nativityofstjohn-oca.org>

Very Rev. John Horosky - Priest

John Conkey - Council President

July 2014

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

Service Schedule

July 6

General Confession @ 9:30 AM
Hours @ 9:45 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

July 13

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

July 20

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy
Council Meeting

July 27

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Pot Luck following Liturgy

Reader's Schedule

Hours

7/6 Doug Donovan
7/13 Mark Ammerman
7/20 John Conkey
7/27 Tom Demchak

Epistle

Doug Donovan
Mark Ammerman
John Conkey
Tom Demchak

Feasts & Saints

7/1 Wonderworkers Cosmas & Damian
7/12 St. Veronica
7/15 Isapostle St. Vladimir
7/20 Holy Apostle Elias
7/21 Holy Prophet Ezekiel
7/22 Isapostle St. Mary Magdalene
7/27 Great Martyr Panteleimon
7/28 Apostle Prochorus
7/31 St. Eudokimos the Martyr



Remember in your prayers: Archbishop MELCHISEDEK, Father John, Father Adam, Father Ted, Father Paul, Father Michael, Matushka Judy Horosky, Matushka Ksenia Batchko, Larry Ammerman, Mary Ann Ammerman, Jen Ammerman with child, Karen Blackburn, Matthew Boroughf, Chris Conkey, Drew Conkey, John Conkey, James Crites, Helen Czar, Eugene Demchak, Joe Demchak, Mike Demchak, Steve Demchak, Kari Donovan, Matthew Donovan, Michael Evans, Bonnie Fetcenko, Randy Fetcenko, Rose Marie Fetcenko, Olga Finlayson, Kenneth Finlayson, Jack Foster, Mary Foster, Harry Horosky, Alexandra Mamrak, Eugene Minarich, Evan Morgan, Richard Nakles, Mary Sura Saupp, Harry Socie, Eleanor Sura, Andrew Tocimak, Irene Tocimak, Louise Tocimak, Walter Varagea, Delores Varagea, Patricia Wood

“O Master, the all-sustainer, and Holy King, Who punishes, but reduces not to death, Who strengthens the failing and raises the outcast, Who remedies the bodily sorrows of men, we pray unto Thee, O Our Lord, visit Thine infirm servants with Thy mercy; forgive them every transgression, voluntary and involuntary. Verily O Lord, send down from Heaven Thy healing power, touch the body, extinguish the fever, lessen the suffering and every infirmity of Thy servants, raise them decumbent, from sickness, and from the bed of evilness, make them whole and all-restored, return them to Thy Church well-pleasing and fulfilling Thy will. For it is of Thine own, to be merciful and to save us, O Lord, and unto Thee we send glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Birthdays

Matushka Judy Horosky	07/07
Joanne Whitehead	07/08
Chris Conkey	07/09
Shirley Donovan	07/09
Alexandra Stine	07/12
Cynthia Posmoga	07/15
Andrew Conkey	07/18
Sarah Demchak	07/18
Rose Marie Fetcenko	07/21
Jan Brennish	07/28
Andrew Tocimak	07/30

Anniversaries

Mary Ann and John Conkey	July 3, 1987
Eleanor and George Sura	July 5, 1959
Svetlana and John Blake	July 11, 1998
Andrew and Louise Tocimak	July 21, 1956

From the Desk of Father John Horosky

On Sunday August 10, 2014 our Archbishop MELCHISEDEK will make an archpastorial visit to our church. Our parish is strong, loving and faithful and His Grace will enjoy seeing all during this visit.

Thanks again to all the people who pitched in to make the dinner for Fr. Edward a success. He was happy with the gathering. I personally will miss him because he was a great help and a good friend.

IMPLICATIONS OF HOLY COMMUNION *(continued from last month)*

For I will not speak of Your mystery to Your enemies, neither will I give You a kiss like Judas.

It means first of all that there are enemies of Christ, and we dare not be naive, like so many who seem to feel that we only have to love the world and the world will respond with love. Read John. "If the world hates you, know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you, Remember the world that I said to you: A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name' sake, because they do not know Him Who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also...(John 15: 18-28)

But like the thief will I confess You.

Compare the chosen apostle Judas Iscariot with the Good Thief. One was selected among the seventy disciples of 5,000 who heard Jesus on the Mount, so there had to be something positive about his nature. The other is the thief who had spent his entire life stealing, robbing, cheating and perhaps much worse. On the cross he did not plead for sympathy, beg to be excused of a bad home life, missing or uncaring parents, a society that did not provide for his welfare; but called out to the third man on a cross, " We are getting what we deserve, but not this man."

We understand how precious is fellowship with Christ in the Church and how easy it is to sin, each sin being against the Lord Jesus, just as wicked as the kiss of Judas because it takes liberties with the compassion of Christ and ignores the high cost of membership in the Church. Fr. V. Berzonsky <http://oca.org/reflections/berzonsky/implications-of-holy-communion>

A Message from your Parish Council President, John Conkey

Too Busy not to Pray by Father Steven Kostoff

“While looking through a catalogue recently from a Christian publishing company, I came across a rather intriguing title: *Too Busy Not to Pray*. I say intriguing because this is a theme that I think about often and one that I have raised with others before. Read that title again carefully, because it does not say Too Busy to Pray, but precisely Too Busy Not to Pray. Either title could serve as an invitation to a book that assumedly addresses the contemporary Christian’s struggle to maintain a regular prayer life amidst his or her busy schedule. However, the title as it stands captures the urgency of the issue much more effectively. I would express that urgency in the following manner: If we are indeed “too busy,” then the only way that we can prevent our lives from spinning out of control—or of losing a God-directed orientation or reducing prayer to moments of danger and stress—is for the “busy person” to be ever-vigilant about praying with regularity to guard such spiritual catastrophes from occurring.

We always need to pray with regularity—“pray without ceasing” [1 Thessalonians 5:17]. But it strikes me that the busier we are, the more urgent it becomes for us to pray. In other words, the busy person cannot afford not to pray. Busy people indeed need the nourishment of prayer. Otherwise, the spiritual dangers are immense. The “business” of our lives make us too busy to ... do what? We are certainly not “too busy” to socialize, to seek entertainment, pleasure and diversion—all necessary to one degree or another because of the pressures of work and other responsibilities. And these diversions are layered onto lives that already feel the strain of “multi-tasking” the endless activities that keep our children educated, developing, healthily-preoccupied, etc. (A social commentator recently wrote that mothers have been reduced to the roles of domestic caretakers and chauffeurs. And is this why we still read such nonsense about the very “need” of fathers?) Therefore, most people carefully construct their schedules so that these extra social and diversionary activities are not terribly neglected. We can cast this under the rubrics of “leisure time” or “recreational time.” (This all gets a bit sloppy when we go further and speak of “vegging out”). It is the careful, calculated and natural integration of such activities into our lives that leaves us with the overwhelming certainty that we are “too busy.” And “too busy” leaves us “too tired.”

And at that point, we just may be. The question then arises again, now with a certain persistence: to busy to ... do what? To pray, to read the Scriptures, to assist a needy neighbor, to visit someone who really needs a visit, or even to call someone we know who is lonely? We are “too busy” to integrate the life of the Church into our lives beyond Sunday mornings. We are “too busy” for Vespers, Bible Studies, Feast Days, etc. Perhaps, finally, we are “too busy” for God! How often do we postpone our relationship with God until we have more time? “If only my life would slow down a bit, then I could turn my attention to God, beyond the perfunctory rushed prayer of my busy, daily life—if I even get to it.”

Is this dilemma unavoidable and irresolvable? Every Christian who does face—or face-up—to this dilemma must search his or her heart and ask, “how is it that I am ‘too busy’ to pray?” Whatever honest answers we come up with, I am convinced that we, indeed, are too busy not to pray.”

<http://oca.org/reflections/fr.-steven-kostoff/too-busy-not-to-pray>

About the Author:

Father Steven Kostoff is rector of Christ the Savior-Holy Spirit Church, Cincinnati, Ohio. He is also a member of the adjunct faculty of the theology department at Xavier University in Cincinnati, where he has taught various courses on Orthodox theology.

Thank you, Council President *John Conkey*

The Hanging Vigil above the Royal Doors of the iconostasis is supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her sister and brother-in-law Margaret and Robert Stefanko.

The Vigils on the Tetrapod are supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her parents, sisters, brothers, husband, nephew and stepfather.

The votives in front of the iconostasis, on the candle stands and in front of the icons in the nave are supported by Andrew & Louise Tocimak in loving memory of George Tocimak.

Call on the Name of the Lord by Father James Meena – Word Magazine, September 1982

“When we feel cut off from the source of our inner strength and power as though that bond between us and God has somehow been short-circuited, it is necessary for us to find a way to get connected again. The early Fathers of the Church discovered a method as simple as putting your hand in the hand of one stronger than yourself. They call it the Prayer of the Heart, the inner prayer of Jesus, “O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” A short prayer but very meaningful, having all the elements necessary to prayer.

The first two words, “O Lord”, are words of submission and indicate our willingness to bend the stiff necks of our heart before our Master and Savior and to humble ourselves before Him who is our Redeemer. We do not and will not ascribe lordship to one who is our equal, nor even to one who is just a little bit better than we are. By the word, “Lord”, we ascribe to Him Who is so far above us that even the thought of Him humbles us and reduces our spirit to a childlikeness that He calls upon us to retain at all times. “O Lord,” the first words of the Jesus Prayer are words of submission.

“Jesus Christ”, are words of historic acknowledgment. They attribute to Him what He is, the Anointed Savior. We call him by the names by which God called Him “His name shall be called Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins,” (St. Matthew, 1:21). “Son of God.” A confession of faith. As though we were reciting the whole Creed from the beginning to the end. “Son of God.” “The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live,” (St. John, 5:25).

What have we? “O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God.” Submission, acknowledgement, confession of faith. “It shall be that whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved,” (Acts, 1:21). “For God sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through Him. Who believes in Him is not condemned but has everlasting life. He who does not believe is condemned already because he does not believe in the name of the only Son of God,” (St. John 3:17-18). While you and I are all children of God yet is there but One Begotten Son and when we call upon Him, “O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,” we call upon Him as the only begotten, as co-eternal with His Father, as co-creator and Redeemer of the universe.

“Have mercy upon me.” A supplication that comes right out of the heart of the Old Testament, “Have mercy upon me O God according to thy great goodness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercy blot out all my iniquities,” (Psalm 50- “51”). “O Lord, Jesus Christ Son of God, have mercy on me,” and the final statement, the statement of contrition and penitence, “a sinner.” Sinners are we all and sinners we remain even though we struggle against the corruption that would drag us down to the depths of hell and even though we, by the grace of God, overcome one sin after another, yet we remain sinners and until and unless we continually acknowledge this can we have no humility before Him, no humbleness of spirit, for our pride prevents us from acknowledging our own corruptible and sinful state.

Thus the Fathers of the Church have given us an eternal link of prayer in this simple statement, “O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner,” and they learned very early in the life of the Church that the pious person offering this simple prayer of the heart over and over again somehow establishes a connection with God that gives solace, strength, reassurance and comfort. St. Paul said, “Pray without ceasing,” (I Thess. 5:17). Never stop praying. The early Fathers of the church, in their desire to fulfill that admonition discovered the prayer of the heart, and they found by offering that prayer continuously that they had a link with God that was real and vital and invigorating.

I have used the prayer of the heart for more than 25 years now, nowhere near as faithfully as I should but I tell you I use it everywhere, in the shower, in my car, in the bedroom, in my office, in Church. Whenever I feel confused and angry and frustrated, whenever I know that I have reached the limits of my own resourcefulness I call out the name of the Lord and I know that the Lord will hear and redeem me.

Have you ever been in a crowded public place and observed a little child, a toddler, walking along full of self confidence, getting into all kinds of things and then suddenly realizing that he or she has been separated from his or her parents? In that moment there comes a look of fear into the eye of the child until it sees the face of the parent and reaches up its hand, takes the hand of its father or mother and feels safe again and secure. So it is with the Jesus prayer. It is our childlike hands of innocent faith being extended upwards to our heavenly Lord and saying: Lead me, protect me and guide me, and never leave me alone.

I use the Jesus Prayer mostly at night in those lonely hours in the darkness between midnight and morning when every person is alone, when nearly every person thinks about the end of his own life, when almost every person sometimes wakes up in a cold sweat and realizes that he has a remembrance of his own end. I am then like that little toddler having stumbled into everything, suddenly realizing that I am alone and that there is no one to help me and protect me until I call upon the name of my Lord, Jesus Christ, and reach my hand up to Him and he always takes it in His and gives me the comfort and the assurance that I need. <http://antiochian.org/node/26055>