

ANNIVERSARY OR OUR DEPARTED FOR THIS SUNDAY

<u>DAY</u>	<u>NAME OF THE DEPARTED</u>	<u>ANNIVERSARY</u>
6	Elias Ghoson Haddad	2
6	Tammam Alfar	31
6	Sofia Fahel	5
6	Maha Zabaneh	25
7	Fred John Burke	31
8	Mary Hutchings	51
8	Thomas Ellies	43
9	Nassib Atallah	3
9	Yacoub Qaqish	27

- **Please**, pray for the health of the following parishioners: Ellen, Robert, Alex, Sam, Elias, Nassar, Valentine, George, Nina, Sonia, George, Elizabeth, Beshara, Samer, Irene and Toni. If you have any names of people who need prayers, email them to father.
- Holy Bread is offered for the good health of Tony & Anne Khoury by Leony Daides.
- **Memorials on Saturdays:** we can do memorials on Saturdays after or before Vespers. Please, consider doing your memorial for your loved one then specially if you are expecting 50 + people.
- **"The Champion" Newsletter:** Father will be starting St. George Newsletter under the name "The Champion" from the troparia of St. George. Ms. Marian Abdallah has a degree in Graphic design and she accepted to be in charge of the newsletter under Father supervision. All organizations: the ladies, the teens, the young adults, the Sunday school, building committee, parish council chairperson, and church treasurer etc. please send her your news to share with the community. Her email marianabdalla@hotmail.ca. Her phone number is 416/708-2423. We will include news about the birth of a new baby for members of our community only, baptisms at St. George, weddings, and funerals for members only will be shared in the Newsletter to. The goal is to produce one by the middle or the 20th of January. Thank you Marian for accepting to help with this task.
- **Blessing of homes:** Father will be blessing homes starting on January 7th. Father will be wearing a mask throughout the blessing of the home. Father will not stay for coffee or food at this time. If you like to have Father bless your home, please email Father at frdahdouh@sbcglobal.net, or text him with your name and address. Father prefers that those who live in an apartments building to arrange for few apartments to be blessed together.
- **Liturgies during January:**
Liturgy Tuesday January 19th at 7 PM
Liturgy Friday January 29th at 7 PM.
- **If you are not receiving The Word magazine at your home address, please email your information to registrar@antiochian.org. You must be an Orthodox and a member of St. George Church.**
- **Bible study will resume on Thursday January 14th with a session on the Orthodox Faith from 7-8, and the Gospel of John from 8-9:30.**

- **House Blessing: Father is blessing homes. Please, don't email the office but Fr. George directly at frdahdouh@sbcglobal.net or call Father.**
- **Young Adults:** Tuesday January 12th Young Adults meeting. zoom meeting at 7 PM.
- **Engaged couples:** all engaged couples must attend meetings with Father. First meeting January 11th at 7:30 PM.
- **Teens and Ladies** getting together coming up soon.
- **Sunday School Registration is NOW OPEN for Semester 2**

Classes begin the week of January 10, 2021. Virtual classes will continue once a week (by Zoom or Google Meet)

Click on the link below to register, **for new students only**. If you were already enrolled last semester, you do not need to register again.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfwwcjwxyFUCbtutzd59cwKVkqcooxSy9HReovsQrVgO29SPg/viewform?usp=sf_link

- **The Feast of Theophany (Baptism of Christ) will be celebrated with the Hours on January 5th at 10 AM. Orthros in the Evening starting at 6:30 PM followed by the Divine Liturgy and the Great blessing of water.**
- **A gentle reminder: don't forget to fulfill your pledge for 2020 and to send your tax-deductible contribution before the end of 2020. God loves a cheerful giver.**
- **Bookstore: New icons have just arrived in our bookstore. The Bookstore is located in the church's basement. Icons are great gifts for newborn, new home, your car or your children, and Christmas gifts. Please see Colette El-Hajj or Odette Boutros to see these new icons.**
- **Please, don't forget to send your sacrificial giving to your church of St. George via e-transfer, or you can still bring your envelope with you and place it in the box by the candles. Your sacrificial giving (financial donation/support) will keep our doors open.**
- **Canned Food Drive:** please bring non-perishable canned food to donate to the needy and place them in the box outside in the Narthex.
- **Online Sunday School has begun and is in full swing. You may still register your children at any time. For further assistance contact Amanda Qaqish at orthodoxchristianeducation@gmail.com.**
- **MASKS ARE STILL MANDATORY INSIDE THE CHURCH. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 2021

TONE 6 / EOTHINON 9

SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST

GREGORY, BISHOP OF NYSSA; MARCIAN THE PRIEST OF CONSTANTINOPLE; DOMETIAN, BISHOP OF MELITENE;
VENERABLE PAUL OF OBNORA AND MAKARIOS OF PISMA; BISHOP THEOPHAN THE RECLUSE

Deacon: For Metropolitan Paul, Archbishop John, and for their quick release from captivity and safe return, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

الشَّماس: مِنْ أَجْلِ المِثْرُوبُولِيْتِ بُولْسَ والمِطْرانِ
يُوحَنَّا وَفَكِّ اسْرِهِما وَعَوْدَتِهِما سَالِمِينَ، إِلى الرَّبِّ
نَطْلُبُ.

الجوقة: يا ربُّ ارْحَم.

THE FIRST ANTIPHON

When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among a barbarous people; Judah became His sanctuary; Israel His dominion.

Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

The sea beheld and fled: Jordan turned back. What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? And thou Jordan, that thou didst turn back? (**Refrain**)

Glory... Both now... (**Refrain**)

عِنْدَ خُرُوجِ إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ مِصْرَ وَبَيْتِ يَعْقُوبَ مِنْ
شَعْبِ أَعْجَمِيٍّ، صَارَ يَهُودًا مَقْدِسًا لَهُ وَإِسْرَائِيلُ
سَلْطَنَتُهُ.

اللازمة: بِشَفَاعَاتِ وَالِدَةِ الإِلهِ، يا مُخَلِّصُ،
خَلِّصْنَا.

أَبْصَرَ البَحْرُ هَذَا فَهَرَبَ وَالأُرْدُنُّ رَجَعَ إِلى الوَرَاءِ.
مَاذَا دَهَاكَ يا بَحْرُ حَتَّى هَرَبْتَ؟ وَيَا أُرْدُنُّ حَتَّى
رَجَعْتَ إِلى الوَرَاءِ؟ (اللازمة)

المجدُ الآنَ (اللازمة)

THE SEOND ANTIPHON

I am filled with love, for the Lord will hear the voice of my supplication. For He hath inclined His ear unto me, and in my days will I call upon Him.

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who was baptized by John in the Jordan; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

The pangs of death have encompassed me; the perils of hades have found me. Tribulation and sorrow have I found, and I called upon the name of the Lord. (**Refrain**)

فَرِحْتُ جِدًّا لِأَنَّ الرَّبَّ يَسْمَعُ صَوْتِ تَضَرُّعِي. إِنَّهُ
أَمَالَ أُذُنَهُ إِليَّ فَأَنَادِيهِ مَا حَيِّثُ.

اللازمة: خَلِّصْنَا، يا ابنَ اللهِ، يا مَنْ اعْتَمَدَ مِنْ
يُوحَنَّا فِي الأُرْدُنِّ، لِنُرْتَلْ لَكَ. هَلْلُوبِيا.

غَمَرَاتُ المَوْتِ اكْتَفَفْتَنِي وَأَهْوَالُ الجَحِيمِ أَدْرَكْتَنِي.
لَقِيْتُ الضِّيقَ وَالأسَى، فَدَعَوْتُ بِاسْمِ
الرَّبِّ. (اللازمة)

Merciful is the Lord, and righteous; and our God hath mercy. <i>(Refrain)</i> Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...	الرَّبُّ رَحِيمٌ وَصَدِيقٌ، إِلَهَنَا رُؤُوفٌ. <i>(اللازمة)</i> المَجْدُ الآنَ يا كَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ الْإِبْنَ الْوَحِيدِ ...
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THE THIRD ANTIPHON

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Israel now confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Aaron confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let them now who fear the Lord confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.	إِحْمَدُوا الرَّبَّ لِأَنَّهُ صَالِحٌ، لِأَنَّ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ رَحْمَتَهُ. لِيَقُلَنَّ بَيْتُ إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنَّهُ صَالِحٌ، وَإِنَّ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ رَحْمَتَهُ. لِيَقُلَنَّ بَيْتُ هَارُونَ إِنَّهُ صَالِحٌ، وَإِنَّ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ رَحْمَتَهُ. لِيَقُلَنَّ خَائِفُوا الرَّبِّ جَمِيعاً إِنَّهُ صَالِحٌ، وَإِنَّ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ رَحْمَتَهُ.
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- During the Little Entrance, after the verses of the Third Antiphon, chant the *Apolytikion of Theophany*. Then, the following:

THE EISODIKON (ENTRANCE HYMN) OF ORDINARY SUNDAYS

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead ; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.	هَلِّمُوا لِنَسْجُدَ وَنَزْكَعَ لِمَسِيحٍ، مَلِكِنَا وَإِلَهِنَا. خَلِّصْنَا يَا ابْنَ اللَّهِ، يَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، لِنُرْتَلَّ لَكَ. هَلِّلُوبِيَا.
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- After the Little Entrance, chant the *apolytikia* in the following order:

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SIX

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.	إِنَّ الْقُوَّاتِ الْمَلَائِكِيَّةَ ظَهَرُوا عَلَى قَبْرِكَ الْمُوقَّرِ، وَالْحُرَّاسَ صَارُوا كَالْأَمْوَاتِ، وَمَرِيمَ وَقَفَتْ عِنْدَ الْقَبْرِ طَالِبَةً جَسَدَكَ الطَّاهِرَ، فَسَبَّيْتَ الْجَحِيمَ وَلَمْ تُجَرَّبْ مِنْهَا، وَصَادَقْتَ الْبَتُولَ مَانِحاً الْحَيَاةَ. فَيَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ، يَا رَبُّ الْمَجْدُ لَكَ.
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APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the likeness of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our	بَاعْتِمَادِكَ يَا رَبُّ فِي نَهْرِ الْأُرْدُنِّ، ظَهَرَتْ السَّجْدَةُ لِلثَّلَاوِثِ، لِأَنَّ صَوْتَ الْآبِ تَقَدَّمَ لَكَ بِالشَّهَادَةِ، مُسَمِّياً إِيَّاكَ ابْناً مَحْبُوباً، وَالرُّوحَ بِهَيْئَةِ حَمَامَةٍ يُوَيِّدُ حَقِيقَةَ الْكَلِمَةِ، فَيَا مَنْ ظَهَرْتَ وَأَنْزَرْتَ
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God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

العالم، أيها المسيح الإله المجد لك.

- Now sing the apolytikion of the patron saint or feast of the temple.

KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

(**The original melody**)

On this day Thou hast appeared * unto the whole world, * and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, * is signed on us who sing Thy praise * and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, * Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable.

قَدْ ظَهَرْتَ لِلدُّنْيَا، ذَا الْيَوْمِ يَا رَبُّ، وَضِيَاؤُكَ ارْتَسَمَ عَلَيْنَا نَحْنُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ لَكَ التَّسْبِيحَ عَنْ مَعْرِفَةٍ قَائِلِينَ: جِئْتَ وَبُنْتَ يَا نُورًا لَا يُدْنَى مِنْهُ.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Sunday after the Theophany of Christ)

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (4:7-13)

Brethren, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it is said, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

لِتَكُنْ يَا رَبُّ رَحْمَتُكَ عَلَيْنَا

ابْتَهِجُوا أَيُّهَا الصَّادِقُونَ بِالرَّبِّ.

فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى

أهل أفسس. (4:7-13)

يا إخوة، لكل واحدٍ مِنَّا أُعْطِيَتِ النِّعْمَةُ عَلَى مِقْدَارِ مَوْهَبَةِ الْمَسِيحِ * فَلِذَلِكَ يَقُولُ "لَمَّا صَعِدَ إِلَى الْعُلَى سَبَى سَبْيًا وَأَعْطَى النَّاسَ عَطَايَا" * فَكَوْنُهُ صَعِدَ، هَلْ هُوَ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ نَزَلَ أَوْلًا إِلَى أَسْفَلِ الْأَرْضِ؟ * فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي نَزَلَ، هُوَ الَّذِي صَعِدَ أَيْضًا فَوْقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ كُلِّهَا لِيَمْلَأَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ * وَهُوَ قَدْ أَعْطَى أَنْ يَكُونَ الْبَعْضُ رُسُلًا، وَالْبَعْضُ أَنْبِيَاءَ، وَالْبَعْضُ مُبَشِّرِينَ، وَالْبَعْضُ رُعَاةً وَمُعَلِّمِينَ * لِأَجْلِ تَكْمِيلِ الْقَدِيسِينَ، وَلِعَمَلِ الْخِدْمَةِ، وَبُنْيَانِ جَسَدِ الْمَسِيحِ * إِلَى أَنْ نَنْتَهِيَ جَمِيعُنَا إِلَى وَحْدَةِ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَعْرِفَةِ ابْنِ اللَّهِ، إِلَى إِنْسَانٍ كَامِلٍ، إِلَى مِقْدَارِ قَامَةِ مَلَأِ الْمَسِيحِ.

THE GOSPEL

(For the Sunday after the Theophany of Christ)

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (4:12-17)

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulon and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارَةِ القديسِ متى الإنجيليِّ البشيرِ والتلميذِ الطاهرِ. (4:12-17)

في ذلكَ الزمانِ، لما سمعَ يسوعُ أنَّ يوحنا قد أُسْلِمَ، انصَرَفَ إلى الجليلِ * وتَرَكَ الناصِرَةَ، وجاءَ فسَكَنَ في كفرناحومَ التي على شاطئِ البحرِ في تخومِ زبولونَ ونفتاليمَ * ليتمَّ ما قيلَ بأشعياءَ النبيِّ القائلِ: أرضُ زبولونَ وأرضُ نفتاليمَ، طريقُ البحرِ، عبْرَ الأردنِّ، جليلُ الأممِ * الشعبُ الجالسُ في الظلمةِ أبصرَ نوراً عظيماً، والجالسونَ في بقعةِ الموتِ وظلالهِ أشرقَ عليهمُ نورٌ * ومُنذُئذٍ ابتدأَ يسوعُ يكرِّزُ ويقولُ: توبوا، فقدِ اقْتَرَبَ مَكوثُ السَّمَاوَاتِ.

- *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom continues as usual.*

THE DISMISSAL

Priest: May He Who deigned to be baptized by John in the Jordan for our salvation, and rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of our father among the saints, John Chrysostom, archbishop of

الكاهن: أيها المسيحُ إلهنا الحقيقي، يا منِ اقْتَبَلَ أَنْ يَعْتَمِدَ مِنْ يوحنا في الأردنِّ مِنْ أَجْلِ خَلَاصِنَا، وقامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الأمواتِ، بِشَفَاعَاتِ امِّكَ الكليَّةِ الطَّهارةِ والبريَّةِ مِنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ؛ وبِقُدْرَةِ الصَّليبِ الكَرِيمِ المُخيِّ؛ وبِطُلُباتِ القُوَّاتِ السَّمَاوِيَّةِ المُكْرَمَةِ العادِمَةِ الأجسادِ؛ والنبيِّ الكَرِيمِ السابقِ المَجيدِ يوحنا المَعْمَدانِ؛ والقديسينِ المُشرفينِ الرُّسلِ الجَدِيرينِ بِكُلِّ مَدِيحٍ؛ وأبيْنَا الجليلِ فِي القَدِيسينِ يوحنا الذَّهبيِّ القمِّ رَئيسِ أساقِفَةِ القِسْطَنْطينيَّةِ، كاتبِ هَذِهِ الخِدْمَةِ الشَّرِيفَةِ؛ والقَدِيسينِ المَجيدينِ الشُّهداءِ المُتألِّقينَ بالظَّفَرِ؛

Constantinople, whose Divine Liturgy we have now celebrated; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; of *Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of our fathers among the saints Gregory, bishop of Nyssa; Marcian the priest of Constantinople; Dometian, bishop of Melitene; Venerable Paul of Obnora and Makarios of Pisma; and Bishop Theophan the Recluse whose memory we celebrate today, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

وَأَبَائِنَا الْأَبْرَارِ الْمُتَوَشِّحِينَ بِاللَّهِ؛ وَالْقَدِّيسِ (فُلَانِ)،
صَاحِبِ وَشَفِيعِ هَذِهِ الرَّعِيَّةِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ؛ وَالْقَدِّيسِينَ
الصِّدِّيقِينَ يُوَاكِمَ وَحَنَّةَ جَدِّي الْمَسِيحِ الْإِلَهِ؛
وَالْقَدِّيسِ غَرِيفُورِيُوسَ أُسْقُفِ نِيصِّصَ؛
وَمَرْكِيَانُوسَ الْكَاهِنِ فِي الْقِسْطَنْطِينِيَّةِ؛
دَوْمِثِيَانُوسَ أُسْقُفِ مَلِيطَةَ؛ وَالْقَدِّيسِ بُولُسَ
الْأَنْبُورِيِّ؛ وَمَكَارِيُوسَ الْبِيْزْمِيِّ؛ وَالْأُسْقُفِ
ثِيُوفَانُوسَ الْمُتَوَجِّدِ، الَّذِينَ نُقِيمُ تَذْكَارَهُمْ الْيَوْمَ،
وَجَمِيعِ قَدِّيسِيكَ، اَرْحَمْنَا وَخَلِّصْنَا بِمَا أَنْكَ صَالِحٌ
وَمُحِبُّ الْبَشَرِ.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

الكَاهِنُ: بِصَلَوَاتِ آبَائِنَا الْقَدِّيسِينَ، أَيُّهَا الرَّبُّ يَسُوعُ
الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهُنَا، اَرْحَمْنَا وَخَلِّصْنَا.

Choir: Amen.

الجوق: آمين.

These texts have been prepared by the Department of Liturgics of the Antiochian Archdiocese

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PLEASE SUPPORT ST. GEORGE'S NEW INITIATIVE TO
HELP THOSE IN NEED THIS WINTER!!

Warm Hands



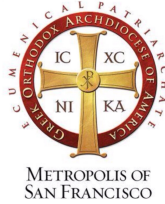
Warm Hearts!!

The need for warm hats, gloves and socks is greater than ever. Through this program, St. George's community is aiming to provide at least 400 sets of gloves, hats and socks to those in need at St. John the Compassionate Mission. Monetary donations of any size will greatly help us meet this goal.

Donations can be made to the Church. Please write on the cheque, or note on the online donation, that the funds are for **Warm Hands, Warm Hearts**.

For more information, or to get involved in packing/distributing, please contact

Joanie Younes (joanieunis@hotmail.com) or Michelle Alexopoulos (malex@chass.utoronto.ca)



YOUTH &
YOUNG ADULT
MINISTRIES



A Prayer for Marriage

By Fr. Timothy Pavlatos

In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

To bear the crowns of marriage, crowns bestowed on us by Your mighty hand, is a great honor and a divine privilege, yet we can easily lose sight of this, as we begin to live our lives routinely.

Because of our own imperfections, we have the capacity to bring upon our marriage relationship challenges which create difficulties.

With our tongue we can praise and glorify You, and yet, utter words that pierce the heart of our beloved.

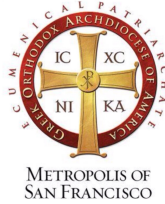
With our actions, we can be holy instruments to help those in time of need, and yet, hurt the one we share our life with most intimately.

Help us, O Lord, so that we may speak and act in ways toward our spouse that are pleasing to You, honoring our crowns, putting our beloved above ourselves, just as you put all of humanity above Your Self coming in the form of a Servant, sacrificing Your very life.

You have told us that when we truly love, we will not insist on our own way, we will not keep track of past wrongs, and we will not provoke the other. The only deficits we should see are our own, and then strive to work on these so that we may grow and become a greater instrument of love.

For this reason, grant us the desire and the ability to serve, speak, and treat our spouse as we would You, with humility, gentleness and kindness. Help us so that we will listen with patience, genuine interest, and joyful curiosity.

Enable us to see and love our most beloved as you see and love them, for without Your help, we will never fully realize the treasure that You have placed before us. We will never see You in them. Amen.



YOUTH &
YOUNG ADULT
MINISTRIES



A Prayer for Spouses Experiencing Conflict

By Fr. Timothy Pavlatos

Lord Jesus Christ, You created my beloved and I as unique individuals, and each of us has had unique experiences throughout our life. Some of our experiences have been good and brought joy, while others have been difficult and brought pain.

Lord, You know that when we were united through Your blessing in the mystery of marriage, we brought all our life experiences with us.

Though we think we know each other well, each of us is a living human document with many pages and chapters to our life still unknown by the other.

Lord, I desire to know my beloved fully and to be fully known. I desire to understand my beloved deeply and be deeply understood. I desire to see my beloved through Your eyes and through Your eyes be seen.

Through Your tender mercy and compassion, help us so that we may speak to one another with kindness and gentle curiosity when it might be difficult.

Grant us patience so that we may listen in order to truly understanding one another, and not assume there is nothing more to learn.

Grant us the ability to ask for forgiveness from one another when we have failed to listen, be kind, gentle and patient.

Help us, O Lord, so that our conflicts may bring us closer to one another and that out of them we will grow, develop deeper connection and greater love and respect for one another.

Grant that we may always hold each other's heart in our hands, delicately, thereby glorifying Your most honored and majestic Name for the blessing you bestowed on us when you united us to one another in the mystery of marriage. Amen.

Editor's note: *The following is a booklet printed by our Archdiocese in 1956. Some of the references are admittedly (culturally) dated because they reflect the circumstances of the 1950's in America. We print it here because it shows that the vision of our Church hierarchy for church membership and leadership has remained consistent. In the past we printed documents of St. Raphael expressing the same Orthodox vision for the Church on these American shores. **This unsigned document is from the office and I believe pen of Metropolitan Antony Bashir.***

THE DUTIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS

TO THE CHURCH

A sunny deck and a steamer chair and nothing to do but lie in it, with the sea to watch, and the throb of distant engines lulling you to sleep, and your every comfort cared for – that is all well enough for a week or two. But would you be willing to sail the seas your whole life long as nothing but a passenger? The boredom of it would prove intolerable. There are thousands of men who spend their lives in sailing the seas, but they are members of the crews of the ships that bear them, alert with interest in their work and proud of their skill. The officer on duty on the bridge, the steersman, the engineer, each knows he is helping to make the great ship go. The trouble with many church members is that they remain mere passengers, year in, year out. They never find any way to help to make the ship to go. They are mere baggage, and sooner or later they find themselves bored by the voyage.

In this list of duties of a church member to the church let us put first one duty which, if it is performed, should sooner or later involve most of the other duties.

1. Find Something to Do for the Church.

Do not be content merely to sit in a pew. "That which is not expressed, dies." And Orthodox Christianity finds precious little expression in mere pew sitting. Do something in person. Write checks if you can, but never let that take the place of first-hand service in the work of your parish.

Are you an accountant? Somewhere there is bookkeeping to be done and done in a better way than it has ever been done before. There are charts to be made to visualize for the members the budget and work of the church.

Are you a writer or editor or advertising man, or have you literary ability? Find how publicity can be made more effective in your parish. Volunteer to edit the calendar, or a weekly or monthly bulletin or parish paper to be mailed to the parishioners.

Are you a stenographer? There are always letters, minutes, addressing and mailing of notices and bulletins.

Have you artistic ability? Think of what attractive posters might do to call attention to the meetings and work of the church. Note improvements needed in decoration of Sunday School rooms and meeting hall.

Have you musical ability? Somewhere in your parish it is needed – in an orchestra, or in the choir of the church, or in a junior choir, or in special programs.

Have you dramatic ability? Those in charge of young people's work will be glad to have your help. Are you a carpenter or a mason? Somewhere in the church is an improvement that the trustees will be glad to have attended to.

Are you a business man or lawyer or banker? There is heavy work each year in the financial canvass and in the making of budgets. The priest knows people facing business trouble, who need some disinterested person to help them to see through their difficulties.

Are you a physician or dentist? Doubtless you do much charity work already. But the priest occasionally has cases of distress laid on his shoulders, and would be glad to know that you are willing to do needed work from time to time as a member of the parish and the Church's ministry.

Women with homes rather than businesses will find waiting for them such work as heling with the social program for the young people, including the furnishing of homes for entertainments; calling on new members, invalids, and old people; and befriending friendless persons . . . an experience which will prove immensely broadening and interesting. Men are needed from time to time as ushers, and women to take charge of the church kitchens and sometimes see that the church is given that kind of housecleaning which not one male sexton in a hundred is capable of conceiving, let alone of carrying into effect. Flowers need to be furnished for the Altar. Altar linens and coverings need to be made and cleaned. Decorations need to be made for special occasions. Phoning and addressing sometimes threaten to consume hours desperately needed by the priest for the preparation of services, sermons, and other duties. Nurseries maintained during the Divine Liturgy will allow parents of young children to attend. There are old people and invalids who will be glad to attend church if some one will drive them there and home again. There are women's aid societies and men's brotherhoods needing loyal workers.

We have left to the last the most important part of the work of the church, that of the Church School. For, "what shall it profit the Church if it gain the whole world and lose the coming generation?" Teachers are needed as well as substitutes, secretaries of records and supplies, musicians, and leaders of young peoples clubs, Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and guilds. Many parishes are looking also for older folk to act as counselors to young people and older boys and girls in working out their own programs. There is probably a summer Church School in June. If you feel unprepared for such duties as these you may receive the necessary help and training from your pastor.

For young people, the obvious field of service open to them is in the working with young people of their own age and also with boys and girls who are somewhat younger. Often the best possible leader for a group of boys and girls is some one only "a few jumps" ahead of them in experience. Such a leader may require advice and help from older folk, but often only such a one can supply the understanding and enthusiasm needed. And often the willingness of a younger person to engage in such work will prove more impressive to boys and girls than the volunteering of some older person. Church and Vacation Schools, Scouting, youth groups, and other such organizations can be immensely encouraged by the leadership of young people.

Young boys and men can be of untold help to the priest in the worship services by becoming servers or "Altar Boys." Teen-age boys sometimes think they have "outgrown" the position of server . . . but one can never be too old to serve in the Sanctuary at the corporate worship of Almighty God.

"Silver and gold have I none," said St. Peter: "but what I have, that give I thee." Find what ability you have and give it. The first thing the church needs from you is active service. If you give it, you will find yourself, not a bored passenger, but an alert, enthusiastic member of the crew.

2. Attend Church

Every Orthodox Christian is duty-bound to join at specified times in the public worship of God, especially on the Lord's Day (Sunday). We attend the celebration of the Liturgy to give to Almighty God the adoration, praise, and thanksgiving which is His due. Some people who do not "feel the need" of the religious help that can come to them through the Church services, conclude that it is right for them to stay away, excusing their absence from public worship on the grounds that they "get nothing out of it." But worship is a giving of ourselves to God, rather than a getting something from Him; it is a sacred duty, not merely something that we do to fulfill our own need. It is, of course, true that we do secure real help from God when first we have drawn near to Him; but the honoring of God is the primary thing, our own satisfaction secondary. For Orthodox Catholic Christians, worship is only complete when we join ourselves with the sacramental offering of Our Lord in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Our motto ought to be, "The Lord's own service, on the Lord's day."

The reason we usually care for anything is because it has something to do with someone we love. We do not have to be told to do it. We just do it. Those who love God go to church to worship Him. The Divine Liturgy is the one really thrilling thing in all the world sand sea and sky. It is the one undimmed truth and the one unfading splendor on earth and in Heaven. It is the one symphony that is celestial. It is the one drama that is divine. It is the one great, gleaming, golden arch that spans from earth to Heaven. The pontiff who build this Bridge to God. And over it walk men and angels.

The truth that the Liturgy contains is simply astounding. The act which expresses that truth is astoundingly simple. It is astounding because it announces that God came to earth and was Incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and dwelt with us, and suffered and died for our sins, and rose from the dead to restore to us everlasting life, and ascended into Heaven to prepare a place for us. But the supremely astounding climax in the Liturgy is the moment when God Who did all this appears in person, sacramentally veiled, and offers Himself as Nourishment for our souls,

The Liturgy is astoundingly simple. So simple that it shows forth in one act things which if they should be written every one, even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. So simple that old men and children, young men and maidens, virgins and matrons, the learned and the unlearned, may hear each in their own language of their own hearts, the wonderful works of God, and see with their own eyes the mighty thing which has come to pass.

When all the world is mixed and muddled and distracted, and willful and wanton and soiled, and mad and sad and wistful, the Liturgy is the massive miracle of truth and light and joy and hope and comfort and peace and sanity and stability, the one thing on earth that shall not pass away.

Besides going to church to honor God, we go in order to help ourselves. It is difficult to make one coal burn alone, but together with other coals it burns readily. Who can resist the spirit of Christmas? It

gets into the very atmosphere. Even Scrooge capitulated. And so with the spirit of corporate worship. It has been said that ordinary people at all levels help each other to be a little more supernatural than each could have been alone. This is another way of saying what Christ said. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

We need to worship because life proves too much for us, or not enough. Sometimes life terrifies us and again it bores us. We need reinforcement in order to meet its tragic moments and we need zest to meet its monotonous ones. Whether life proves too much for us or too little, sooner or later we succumb to spiritual weariness. And then public worship is our salvation.

Life may have proved too much for us imposed on us a task too great, a sorrow too deep, a defeat too crushing, a temptation too dangerous. Or life may not have proved enough, so that we find ourselves "filled with a weariness of all that is old and habitual," find "ambition's sails drooping," and come to a bitter doubt of the worth of all our efforts. In either case, public worship proves our spiritual self-preservation: it renews the spirit as sleep renews the body; it cleanses, sanctifies, and leads us along the road to salvation. Whether it be the "too-bigness" of life or its "too-littleness" that distresses us, church worship brings us the experience of God which lifts us out of our burdened lives or out of our bored ones. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

There is more to being a Christian than going to church, but if you unnecessarily stop going to church, your interest in the Church will very probably die. You will in all likelihood become dead wood on the church roll, and it would be better had you not been Baptized and joined the Church at all. Recall your vow of allegiance to Christ at Baptism spoken by your sponsors, attend church worship resolutely, and strive to bring your life into conformance with what Christian worship implies. Every true Christian will, without fail, be present in church every Sunday and Holyday.

Attend the divine service of your church in worshipful attitude. Make your contribution to that corporate spirit a helpful one. Pray for the worship when you have entered . . . for yourself, your fellow worshippers, and those who minister. During the Liturgy give your whole attention to the divine drama being reenacted: pray with the priest as he prays, let the Liturgy be your prayer. Especially during the opening minutes of the Liturgy, take care to maintain an attitude of desire and expectation.

3. Support your Church Financially

Jesus did not care about money for its own sake. "His only purse was a fish's mouth." But He cared about money tremendously for the sake of man's spiritual welfare. It has been claimed that one verse in seven in the Holy Gospels refers to money. Christ was a skilled physician of souls and He knew how avarice preys on men like a spiritual cancer, and how their miserliness¹ toward God and their fellows proves their own great spiritual hindrance.

In the Liturgy we repeat that great old Creed, "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth . . . And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God . . . And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord . . . In one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church . . . one Baptism... the Resurrection of the dead, and the Life of the world to come." And then, on the instant when our lips prepare to say, "Amen," away below the

¹ Editor substituted an archaic word

level of our conscious thoughts an inexorable conscience asks: "Do you believe it? How much do you believe it? How much have you given to it this week? As much as for that entertainment, that dinner out, that unnecessary luxury?" Or in some "date with adversity," when we desperately need help and kneel to pray for it, our conscience will mock us if it can. It will ask us what right we have to pray. Some deep ingrained honesty within us sits in judgment on our prayer, and if we know that we have not played square with God, and have refused God the support His Kingdom needs, that prayer is stifled on our lips. We may not know what has discounted the Creed, or hindered our prayer. We may only know that our Amen" reverberates in our mind as if it had been followed by a question mark. We may sigh to ourselves that prayer has never seemed very real to us. But the real difficulty is that deep within ourselves we know that we have no right to lift our souls to the earnest God who waits on our laggard loyalty. An Old Testament Prophet said that when men quit robbing God, God would pour them out a blessing such as there would not be room enough to receive. This is not because God sells His blessings, but because His richest blessings can come only to those who are loyal to Him.

So, when that deep-seated conscience sits in judgment on our worship, or our prayer, if we can answer, "yes, I believe – by this old coat, by the hat I went without, by the old car I still am driving." Then the question mark changes into an exclamation point. We have witnessed our belief at the judgment bar of our conscience. We have proved it to ourselves. And also, we might add, to the world, for the world is not looking for a religion the expansion of which is worth to its devotees the present average of only three cents a day.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over . . . For with what measure ye mete it shall he measured to you again."

Every Christian is expected to give to his church, and to give regularly and in proportion as he has been prospered. "Upon the first day of the week," wrote St. Paul, "let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper." The only safe way to take care of such a duty is to systematize it. Except for those few of us who receive our income in one yearly sum, the only way we can possibly pay what we ought is to pay it in small installments; so that if we pay our church moneys only once or twice a year it is proof positive that we have not come near the line of sacrifice, and are only "tipping the Lord." We ought to give a sum we could not pay in one yearly contribution!

"Let each one of you lay by him . . . as he may prosper." Jesus cared more about proportion than about amount. It took His eyes to see the widow's little coins larger than all the payments of the rich who had passed that same treasury box (Mark 12 41-44). And still He sits over against the treasury and beholds how we cast money into it! We are not to give what is left. We are to give in proportion as we have prospered. What proportion? The Jews, we often hear, gave a tenth. Actually they gave a good deal more than that. Are we less indebted to God than the ancient Jews? Some of our gifts will go, of course, to other welfare causes, not to the Church. But a generous share of them we owe to the Church.

It costs money to operate the church in which we worship. We do not want to be slackers. Once a year, in most well-organized parishes, every member is asked to subscribe for its support. Your duty as a member is to make your subscription loyally and sacrificially.

You also are asked for time to time to subscribe to the benevolent budget of the diocese, from which payments are made to support the national enterprises of the Orthodox Church, to its work of Christian education, and to various other undertakings.

Young parishioners should begin to support the Church as soon as they begin work or receive a regular income of some sort. Their subscriptions may not be large, but they are important subscriptions because they will continue for a long time, and the challenge of Christian stewardship is far better faced in early years than at that most difficult time of all, when the establishment of a home makes perhaps the heaviest drain of a lifetime on one's income.

4. Grow in Grace and Christian Knowledge.

Just as water cannot rise above its own level, so you cannot contribute to the Church more than you really are. One of your duties to the Church, then, is to grow, yourself, in grace and Christian knowledge.

We have a positive duty to spend some time in private prayer each day. Our daily private devotions afford us an indication of our spiritual condition. They are reliable tests of spiritual vitality. If we are normal, our morning and night prayers will be regular. If they are irregular there is something wrong somewhere. It will be well to provide ourselves with a book of prayers to form a scheme of prayer. We need a model form which will illustrate the scope and content of private prayer. In time, undoubtedly, we will color our own prayer life; we will pray more and more in our own words. But we will retain the outline, and the structure will be the lasting legacy of our book.

We will need a visible sign to serve us as a reminder of our duty to pray. We ought to have an Icon hanging on the wall of our sleeping room. Bring the Icon to the church to be blessed. Then pray your way through life before it.

The spirit of private daily prayer is this. In the morning you renew our life vow to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant into your life's end. Give thanks that you were allowed to awaken to a new day. Ask God's blessing on your day's activities. The Christian signs himself with the sign of the Cross to show that he intends all through the day, wherever he may be. Whatever he may do, to be loyal to God. Loyalty is the watchword by day.

At night you commend those for whose well-being you are responsible to God. You pray for forgiveness for your failures. You return thanks for your mercies. You pray for blessing. Then in simple faith you take your rest. Trust is the watchword by night.

Private prayer ought to include not only vocal prayers, but also some time (perhaps only five minutes per day at the start) for mental prayer, or "meditation." The latter word is apt to suggest something strange and forbidding to those who have never tried it. Actually, mental prayer is the simplest and most natural, as well as one of the most rewarding forms of prayer. While various formal schemes or "methods of meditation" have been used, and have been found helpful by man, mental prayer, in its essentials, requires only a quiet place to retire to, and some sort of a time-keeper, so that we may give the full time we intend to this coming apart with God. We may kneel, or sit, or take any other posture that is helpful to us; not too comfortable, lest we fall asleep; not too uncomfortable either, lest our thoughts be centered more on our own physical distress, than on God. We try to make ourselves quiet, to "calm down" inside; we try to remember that God is with us. We think of His love and goodness, and

praise Him for them: we ask His help; we thank Him for His many blessings; we tell Him of our sorrow for our sins and failures; we resolve with His help to carry out His holy Will more perfectly in the future; perhaps applying our resolution to some very definite situation which may present itself to us that very day. All these prayers are mostly in thought, rather than in words. We may use, as a help to get started in our prayer, some words taken from the Gospels, Epistles, or Psalms, or a few words from one of the great devotional classics, such as "My Life in Christ" by Father John of Cronstadt.

We also have a duty of praying for others/ the duty of intercessory prayer. How this duty will be carried out is something that must be determined by the individual. Many people find much help in compiling personal lists of intercessions, with the names of relatives, friends, the sick, the departed, the needy, the work of the Church, its local work, the world-wide activities, noted down. They can then go through this list, in whole or in part, every day lifting up these persons or objects to God, asking His blessings on them. Such unselfishness will lend wings to your prayers. For most of us are lamentably self-engrossed in our praying. If your experience of prayer is disappointing, the priest will be able to suggest helpful books, and perhaps some prayers which may deepen and enrich your own.

Take care, also, of your Bible-reading. Stake out certain areas from time to time for intelligent study, and pursue such study with the aids of handbooks or introductions, about which the priest, again, will be glad to advise you. We ought to have the following intentions for Bible reading: learning, patience, comfort, hope. We are to learn to know God and Jesus Christ whom He sent. The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth, speaking through the Church, the infallible interpreter of Holy Scripture. We are to learn to glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation works patience. We are to learn to find our comfort in friendship with God. We are to learn, from our experience in God's friendship, to hope all things.

The Bible is our best collection of lives of the Saints. Everything came true for the Saints and they lived happily ever after. The Bible is the Book of Happy Endings. As to making a rule about reading the Bible, we ought to read it daily. We may safely resolve to read "a few verses daily." This would mean two or more verses. We can always do that, no matter how rushed a day may be. We may have enough time and freedom to give five or ten or fifteen minutes. A good time for reading the Bible is at supper time when the whole family is together.

Books on religious subjects, written for laymen, are pouring from the presses today – such books as will deepen your faith, broaden your religious horizons, answer many of your questions. Excellent church journals are published, concerning which your priest will be glad to give you information. It would be well if every parish possessed a library of the excellent Orthodox spiritual writings which have appeared in the past few years. Do not depend on the pastor's sermons alone for the enrichment of your Christian knowledge and experience. Strike out for yourself. Study your Bible and read religious books and lives of the Saints.

The best way to grow in grace is by approaching the Sacraments more frequently. Periodic self-examination, accompanied by real purpose of amendment, with the help of God's grace, is necessary for spiritual progress; and this is most fruitful and effective when accompanied by sacramental absolution which is received in the Sacrament of Penance. The promise of the Gospel is that Our Lord will give us power to become the sons of God. He makes us His children in Baptism. He gives us the power of children of God in Holy Communion. The power is renewed with every Communion. It is developed by filial devotion.

When we stand with hands crossed over upon our breasts at the Altar, we offer and receive a gift. Our gift to God is ourselves, our souls and bodies, our understanding, memory, will and affections. God's gift to us is Himself. His sacred humanity unites our own with Him. The fire of His love consumes the evil that is in us and releases the good which He has made possible for us. That good is rightly called virtue or power. It is the power of the sons of God. It is the energy released by the action of Divine fire upon human nature. It is stronger than any force opposed to God. It prevails over every enemy of the sons of God. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him."

5. Draw Others to the Church

Your friends need the Church, and your parish needs your friends. In all probability you have friends who do not belong to any church. There is a real opportunity for you to do missionary work by bringing these people into Orthodoxy. How many Orthodox Christians are there who have never invited a non-Orthodox friend to visit their parish church for services? And yet the Orthodox Church of Christ offers what millions are searching for. It is fundamentally designed out of ancient experience to express and meet the needs of men in the fullest sense, to conserve the great values of the past and to be open to the demands of present and future. It reinforces its members where they need strength and security, and in doing so sets them free to serve. It lifts them up always to God and keeps before them "the first and great commandment" to love God emotionally with the whole heart, actively with all strength, and intelligently with the mind. In Orthodoxy we possess a great treasure, and it is our duty to learn about our Faith so that we can readily explain it, and what it means to us, and why others ought to share in it.

And you can appeal to the unchurched Christians about you with an effectiveness which no one else can have. The priest's words they discount because it is his professional duty to speak them. Here, then, is an open door of service for you. You need not be able to quote long passages of Scripture, or argue the fine points of theology, or preach a kind of sermon. Is it so difficult to invite a neighbor to attend church with you?

Christ's last command to the Apostles places upon His Church and its members the obligation to make converts. Of course every member of Christ should strive to grow in grace and to develop his personal spiritual life. But growth in grace is greatly a matter of wanting to share with others. Belief in Christ means ever so much more than assent to the Creed. Right belief (Orthodoxy) means the joyful will to make Christ and His Church known to our neighbors. The chief chaplain at one of the Naval Training Schools during the last War interviewed a large share of eighty thousand young Americans, and found that one of the principal criticisms these young men leveled at the Church was that of its amazing muteness. They said if one of their fellows found a good brand of cigars or a good entertainment he did not keep the discovery a secret. They thought that what we like to call our "reverent reticence" was really our lack of faith in our own religion. If God is real and kind and near and helpful, if He can make weak men strong and lonely hearts glad and defeated lives victorious, how can we keep quiet about it? Jesus still says, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."

Young people who are dating or are engaged to marry someone who is non-Orthodox, are in an excellent position to bring in new members to the church. It is not too much to believe that if someone is interested enough in you as a person to fall in love with you, he or she must also be interested in your religious background, because it is one of the things that makes you what you are. You must be able to present your faith to your possible life partner in such a way as to set forth your ideals. Invite him or her

to attend church with you and join you in your family devotions. Let your future marriage partner know that you love your church and that you will not be deprived of the comfort of its sacramental life. In this way only is that mutual understanding possible on which a happy, successful and durable marriage can be founded.

6. Promote a Spirit of Love within the Church

“A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you . . . By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another.” This is one of the supreme tests. Not participation in the Sacraments, not listening to sermons, nor engaging in Christian activities, nor even giving money, is the final criterion. The hardest is that of love. It has been pointed out that even the Lord Himself could not, after years of patient training, get twelve men to sit down together at a table on the last night of His life without an exhibition of petty irritations and wounded vanity. His supreme prayer for His followers was that they might be one.

When St. Paul wrote to his converts at Corinth, he was hurt by their idolatry, their greediness, their drunkenness, and their shocking immorality but worst of all to Him was their wrangling within the church. Some liked one presbyter better, some another. Some thought themselves more spiritual than others. Some were lax in conduct; some were strict. And each group despised the other. St. Paul told them, “Though I could preach with the tongue of men and of angels, though I could pray with great fervency, though I knew all manner of Biblical mysteries, though I had all faith, even to remove mountains, and though I gave away everything, even my life, and yet had not love, I should have zero!”

And St. John said: “If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.”

It has been said that our immediate task is not to Christianize the world, but to Christianize the parish. It is useless to preach the brotherhood of all men if we have not realized the brotherhood of all men if we have not realized the brotherhood of Christians within our churches. Study, then, the peace of the parish. Refrain from criticism of its priest or its members. Express your views in parochial meeting, but if the majority do not agree with you, acquiesce in the will of the greater number. Be tolerant. Every healthy organization exists in a state of reasonable tension between enthusiasts for that which is new and devotees to that which is old. Both groups have their function, and each needs the check of the other. Do not create dissension. For he who sins against love within Christ’s Church, however faultless his conduct otherwise may be, fails of Christlike spirit in the most important test of all, and deals the deadliest blow of all to the life of the parish.

Loneliness is the major social evil, it has been pointed out. People are entertained enough and organized enough but in our cities they become more and more friendless. Here is the parish church’s great opportunity. Help, then, to make new members at home. In every way possible promote the warmest fellowship and unity and love within the parish of which you are a part.

7. Stand by the Pastor of the Church.

The parish should be “not the priest’s field but his force.” Its members are “not sheep to be tended but soldiers enlisted for a desperate warfare.” The priest is the divinely appointed commissioned officer who leads us in the battle against sin and evil and attempts to lead his army to the final victory of

salvation. The priest is the father of the family of Christ, the “small Church,” which exists for mutual work and assistance and together ascends the spiritual ladder to God. The priest is the ambassador of Christ, working to save not merely your soul but the souls of all the others in the parish. If you do not care for his person, at least you should care for his powers, his office, his apostolate, and consequently should help him promote the cause for which he is striving. Give your priest, then, the utmost loyalty.

The priest may have his human imperfections. The correcting of these ought to be left to his bishop. You may sometimes be tempted to criticize his sermons. Remember that no human being can maintain the highest level of preaching week after week. He must study, write, speak on many occasions, call and guide the various parochial activities and be involved in diocesan work. The priest is frequently underpaid and often his labors are rewarded like the man in the fable whose hand was bitten by the dog he saved. His work should be judged with sympathy, and your criticism of him should be constructive. Tell him when he has helped you. Suggest to him ways in which he might help you or others of whose need you know.

Unless you are in particular need of his help, do not expect him to come to see you often. If you are in need, do not expect him to become aware of it by telepathy, but let him know. Remember that if he calls more frequently at another home it may be because its members are indispensable in the work of the church, or have special need of his help. When he does call at your home it is in order to know you, and to understand your needs in order that they may be met by the ministrations and work of the church. He wants to meet all the members of the family, and will be sorry if you send the children out of the room. Teach your children not to ignore the priest but to greet him and ask for his blessing.

The priest will not thank you for unfavorable news about other members of the parish, for he must minister to all its members, and in order to do so needs to think as well of them as possible. He will wish to know, when he calls, how he can help you or anyone of whose need you know. And he will deeply appreciate your confidence if you will give it to him.

He needs your prayers. Every priest knows at times an access of power which he can attribute only to the prayers of his people. And he needs your help. One of the most wearing of his tasks is to discover workers for the activities of the parish. He cannot carry all its duties by himself, and he should not even if he could, for that would rob his people of the experience and privilege of Christian service. When he comes to you for assistance, then, do not make him hear words he has already heard only too often, “Can’t you find some one else?” Accept the work for which he has chosen you gladly, and save his powers of persuasion, for he has more than enough need for them.

8. Be Loyal to the Church.

The Church has incurred criticism and endured attack in every age. Much of this arises from the sheer enmity of the forces of evil. Let the Church move against war, economic injustice, political corruption, crime, or vice, and the world’s hostility is quickly aroused. Church members should be prepared intelligently to defend the good name of the Church, instead of weakly acquiescing in the wholesale criticism of it. It goes without saying, surely, that members of a parish should refrain from disparaging its efforts and magnifying its failures, or spreading evil reports of its members or officers. How blameworthy are those who publish far and wide the misdeeds of a priest! If trouble arises in the life of the parish, the matter should not be aired in public but rather treated as a family affair.

Our duty as loyal members of the Church is to listen to the voice of Christ teaching through His Church; obey its teachings; give glory to God by our good lives, and help others to find their way into the Church. We are disloyal to God and the Church when we sin by irreligion and sacrilege and superstition, and when we fail to walk in God's paths, do not love Him and do not serve Him with our whole heart and soul (Deut. 10:12). We are guilty of sacrilege when we treat persons, places or things consecrated to God irreverently. How can we expect others to respect our churches if we ourselves do not. Those people who make use of charms and amulets, who resort to fortune tellers and other superstitious practices are also disloyal to the Church and God.

Those who leave the Church in times of persecution, or to make a good marriage, or for business purposes, or for some other unworthy motive sin greatly against God and the Church, and through this disloyalty bring down upon themselves the harsh condemnation of God. St. Cyprian said, "He cannot have God for a Father, who has not the Church for a Mother."

The parish needs your critical loyalty. You will undoubtedly discover aspects of its life and work which need improvement. Help to improve them. Attend parochial meetings and prepare yourself to vote intelligently. State your convictions but be ready to accept the will of the majority.

9. Give Evidence of the Power of Christ by a Christian Life

It is the sermons parishioners preach by the manner of their lives which, far more than those preached by any priest, bring other people to Christ or drive them away from Him. It is not what we say, but what we do or do not do . . . the laugh with which we do not greet a story, the criticism or cynicism from which we refrain, the slight shabby business practice we avoid, the easy conformity into which we refuse to fall . . . that speaks more loudly for Christ than anything we might say to witness for Him with our lips.

Who is the most formidable enemy of a physician? Is it another doctor who happens to be a competitor? No. It is a patient who goes around saying, "I took the medicine that doctor gave me, and it made me worse." Now if Christianity professes to be able to heal men and women, to make them better, every church member who is not made better is a serious argument against the truth of Christianity in the eyes of unbelievers. All professed Christians who exhibit in their lives selfishness, cheating, hardness of heart, meanness, jealousy, envy, hatred, are terrible indictments against the Christian religion to non-Christians.

Of course the presence in the Church of members who are sinners proves it to be Christ's Church no less than does the presence of its Saints. We could be very certain that the Church would have ceased to exist if there were no sinful Orthodox Christians. For the purpose of the Church is to transform sinners into Saints. If everyone were Saints to begin with, there would be no reason for the Church. Christ did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Many non-Orthodox persons do not understand this, however, and when they see Orthodox Christians behaving sinfully they condemn the Church. Such actions bring dishonor upon the Church. When Christians behave badly it is as if they carried a placard on their breasts, proclaiming in large letters: CHRISTIANITY IS A FAILURE. Many generals have addressed these words to troops ordered abroad during the last war: "Remember that the honor of the Army and of our Country depends upon your individual conduct." Just so the honor of Christ's Church depends on your individual conduct.

The worst heresy, it has been said, is the heresy of those who proclaim their belief in Christ as God, but do not treat Him as God. Jesus Himself said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in Heaven."

This means that we are not merely to refrain from sensational sins, but also from those less sensational ones such as hypocrisy, worldliness, intolerance, and selfishness, which, one writer has recently said, were the sins which Jesus hated above all others, and which, it may be added, are precisely the ones which, in church members, most often bring Christianity into disrepute among those who are not Christians. Christian morality involves abstention, not only from sexual irregularity and drunkenness, but also from hard bargains with customers or employees. If we take Christ in earnest, we cannot live for outward show or passing pleasure or physical comfort. Every Christian knows deep in his heart, that to take Christ in earnest means a life lived as if the things Christ stood for were true. That means a life of irreproachable honesty, a life of unflinching kindness, a life which obviously puts first the things of the spirit and not the things of sense. If it can be said of us, after we are gone, that we have made "faith in goodness easy to other men," we shall have witnessed for Christ and His Church, not only by word but, in that far more difficult and far more significant way, by the manner of life we have lived.

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