

GENERAL & SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

Regarding the Temple: In our tradition, the church temple is a house of prayer. Upon entering it, please refrain from unnecessary conversation before, during and after church services, most especially during the Divine Liturgy. Prior to divine services, or during coffee hour in the Church Hall is the appropriate place to exchange personal greetings and converse with one another. May God bless your reverence and piety!

Sick/Emergency Calls/Institutional Visitations: are answered as requests are received. All visitations are by request. Call to schedule an appointment.

Confessions: Are heard one half-hour before every service at Holy Assumption, and once a month at Ss. Peter & Paul. Special arrangements by necessity, and thereby, appointment only.

Sacraments of Illumination: In the case of infants, Baptism, Chrismation, & Eucharist are administered on ordinary Sundays of the church year, preferably in the context of Divine Liturgy. At least one sponsor must be of the Orthodox Faith and in good sacramental standing. The newly baptized must have one name that is Biblical or Christian in its origin.

What is Church Membership? By regulation, active membership in the church consists not merely in the payment of a set sum, or by fulfilling a *minimum* sacramental obligation, but rather in participation in the life of the church (commensurate with your physical ability). This includes entering into the spirit of the faith through regular and frequent attendance, participation in the divine mysteries, sustained financial support (at a percentage that reflects your ability), and adherence to the parish, diocesan, and national church statutes.

Receiving Communion: while all are welcome to pray with us, we politely offer a reminder that the Orthodox Church maintains a closed communion. All are welcome to Antidoron bread following the Divine Liturgy, but only prepared Orthodox Christians may receive the Eucharist. Orthodox Christians do not commune in non-Orthodox churches, and the non-Orthodox are not communed in an Orthodox Church. Thank you!

Lapsed Members: You are always welcome home, and we need you! Generally speaking, sincere Confession, Communion, and regular attendance are all that is required to begin parish life anew! See Fr. Elijah for specific details.

New Members/Adult Chrismation: new members are always welcome. In the case of interested adults seeking Chrismation, a period of catechesis prescribed by the pastor is necessary before the administration of Holy Mysteries. An Orthodox sponsor is required.

Weddings: A minimum six-month notice is requested. Either Bride or Bride-groom must be an Orthodox Christian, and a parishioner in good standing. Dispensations may be required for inter-faith marriages (the marriage of an Orthodox & any non-Orthodox person). Banns of matrimony published 3 weeks before ceremony. No Weddings performed during fasting seasons!!!

Burial in Church Cemetery: Burial in consecrated ground is reserved for the Orthodox and their spouses/children. Charity burials, or odd circumstances are at the rector's discretion. It is strongly encouraged to hold viewings and visitation of the reposed in the church.

Our Stewardship of the Church: "Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art the good steward, who redeemed Adam and Eve of their failed stewardship by offering Thyself for the life of the world. Thou didst teach us in the feeding of the multitudes that whatever we give to God is returned to us multiplied. Thou didst praise those good and faithful servants in the parable of the talents who returned to the Master their gifts. So help us to learn the joy of stewardship, remembering that everything we have comes from Thee and belongs to Thee. We know, Lord, that we often live in fear of the future and insecurity. Help us to remember the lilies of the field and so to trust in Thy providence. Grant to us a cheerful and generous spirit. Enkindle in the hearts of all Thy people a zealous love for Thee. For Thou art the Good Steward, and to Thee we give thanks, praise and glory, together with Thy Father who is from everlasting and Thine all holy good and life-giving Spirit now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Prayer When Lighting A Candle: "Set our hearts on fire with love for Thee, O Christ our God, so that in this flame we may love Thee with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, so that by keeping Thy commandments we may glorify Thee, the giver of all good gifts. Amen."

HOLY ASSUMPTION ORTHODOX CHURCH

629 Sunshine Avenue • Central City, Pa. 15926

SS. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Tipple Road • Goodtown, Pa. 15530



Very Rev. Archpriest Elijah J. Bremer, Rector
412 Short Cut Road • Alum Bank, Pa 15521
814-977-7397 • otets.ilya@yahoo.com

**16th Sunday Post-Pentecost,
13 October 2024**

*"But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil."
(Luke 6: 35)*

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE 13 - 20 OCTOBER 2024

Sunday 13 October Tone 7	16th Sunday Post-Pentecost Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:1-10 Gospel: Luke 6: 31-36	8:40 am , Hours of Prayer (CC) 9:00 am , Divine Liturgy (CC)
Sunday 20 October Tone 8	17th Sunday Post-Pentecost Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1 Gospel: Luke 7: 11-16	8:40 am , Hours of Prayer (CC) 9:00 am , Divine Liturgy* (CC)

~Important Considerations ~

All persons are present at their own risk. Please refrain from attending if you are currently sick, or if you were exposed to a contagious disease. Also understand that if you do not attend Church for more than three weeks without just cause, according to canon law you must go to confession prior to receiving Holy Communion.

ГЛАВА ИУСЕСХ ХРІСТУ!

CHORAL CONDUCTING AND SINGING WORKSHOP TO BE HELD AT ST. TIKHON'S MONASTERY South Canaan, Pa.



Orthodox choir directors and church singers, you are warmly invited to join us at St. Tikhon's Monastery November 8-10 for our choral conducting and singing workshop with our featured instructor, Fr. Caleb Lewis, Director of Music at St. Tikhon's.

Come participate in this weekend workshop as either a conductor or as a chorister. Conductors of all levels are welcome! You can expect practical conducting guidance, live feedback, individualized coaching on technique and hands-on problem solving. Singers will enjoy gleaning from being part of the choir and participating in overall ensemble instruction. Student rates are available for both conductors and singers.

Q & A will be offered throughout the weekend to allow you to glean from Fr. Caleb's expertise on both choral conducting and singing. The workshop will culminate with attendees participating in the music for St. Tikhon's Monastery's Sunday Divine Liturgy.

Prior to coming to St. Tikhon's Fr. Caleb Lewis was Director of Choirs at UC Davis. He worked throughout the San Francisco Bay Area as a conductor, clinician, baritone soloist, and chorister with such ensembles as the American Bach Soloists, the San Francisco Choral Artists, and the San Francisco Bach Choir. Fr. Caleb is St. Tikhon's new director of music. He serves as faculty for music residents, as well as lead music educator for seminarians, preparing future church musicians and priests who can beautify the worship of the Orthodox Church.

For more information/registration, visit: <https://sttikhonsmusicprogram.com/retreats/p/choral-conducting-workshop-november>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Archdiocesan Assembly: will be held on 2 November at the Cathedral Parish of St. Alexander Nevsky in Allison Park. Each parish should send at least one voting delegate. Additional observers are welcome. Please speak with Fr. Elijah if you can attend and represent our parish. Lunch is provided.

From Our Archdiocese: Orthodox Christians aged 18-35 are invited to a weekend of reflection, fellowship, and spiritual renewal at the annual Young Adult Fall Retreat, happening the weekend of October 25-27, 2024, at Camp Nazareth. This year's theme, "Caring for God's Creation: The Self," will be explored by keynote speaker Alex Balouris, who will guide participants in understanding how we can honor God by caring for our mental, physical, and spiritual health. For more details and registration, visit <https://tinyurl.com/uafall2024>.

Community Trick-Or-Treat Night: is scheduled for Saturday, 26 October from 6 to 8 pm. All donations toward treat bags can be placed in the church hall between now and 20 October. Update: The Altar/Volunteer Society will meet and pack treat bags on Tuesday evening, 22 October at 6 pm. Thank you for the donations toward this outreach project!

Vespers on Saturday evening, 26 October: so that no one can accuse us of preferring treat distribution over the order of services of the church, we will celebrate a simple Saturday evening Vesper service at 5 pm. Everyone is welcome, regardless of their participation in the treat distribution.

Shade/Central City Food Pantry: will hold a purse & prize bingo and basket raffle on Sunday, 20 October at Queen of Angels Social Hall. A flyer with additional information is posted in the church. Seating is limited to 200, and tickets are \$30 per person. Speak with Sharon Swirchak, or call 814.754.5584.

Pro-Life Event: Bishop Carroll Catholic High School will host the 2024 Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast on October 19 at 9:00 am. The event is sponsored by the Cambria-Somerset Citizens Concerned for Life. All sympathetic parties are invited to attend. The keynote speaker is Kristan Hawkins, president of Student for Life America. Suggested donation is \$15. Contact Ann Pole at 814.472.8584, or Steve Dillon at 814.241.2772.

Upcoming Veterans Event: if you are a veteran of any branch of the armed forces, you are invited to Admiral Peary AVTS on Thursday, 7 November at 8 am, or 12 pm for a free meal (breakfast in the morning, lunch in the afternoon). The address is 948 Benjamin Franklin Highway, Ebensburg, Pa. 15931. Cosmetology students will also offer a free haircut or non-chemical treatment. You may call 814.472.6490, extension 335 to reserve a spot.

Advance Notice: Daylight Saving Time: ends on 3 November 2024. Remember to "fall back" one hour before bed on 11/2.

Updating the Church Bulletin Board: fair notice is given that all material (old thank-you notes, flyers, etc...) will be removed from the bulletin board to make way for new postings. Community, charity, and non-profit events are always welcome to advertise there. Thank you!

Church Parking Lot Sign: a sign specifying that the church parking lot is for church members and service parking was installed yesterday. This is to help reduce our liability related to people using our space for unintended purposes.



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LOVE FOR YOUR ENEMIES IS A CHALLENGE OF LIFE

Source: *pemptousia.com*

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES JUST IN CASE YOUR FRIENDS TURN OUT TO BE A BUNCH OF BASTARDS.

The interaction between love and justice doesn't remove the tension between them. Without justice, human relationships become harsh and callous; without love, they become stifling and brutal. Love doesn't abolish justice, nor is it a substitute for it. But it does keep it on the right path and shows the direction for it to follow. It's the abiding power which has its root in God. So when we ask for goodness, understanding and love from others, this means that we see them in the depth of their existence. This is precisely where it's evident that each of us is a living image of God, and that, no matter how tarnished and sullied we are, we're still of supreme worth. In this way, we're brought naturally and gently to love.

Love for your enemies.

For us the faithful, love is the fulfillment of the law, the quintessence of the Christian faith and life, the core of the Christian revelation. Love is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, it's the treasury and treasure of our faith. It's love which is directed towards and embraces every other person without exception. When we love only those who love us; when we do good only to those who do good to us; when we assist only those who assist us, then our love is counterfeit, fraudulent and selfish. It's subject to the everyday game of give and take- I scratch your back, you scratch mine- and the relationships which are forged within this context are based on a network of mutual favors. But such behavior is reprehensible in terms of Christ's words because it's motivated by self-interested calculation. This means that the measure with which we weigh everything around us and according to which we act is our self, and then we sink into isolation and loneliness.

Other people are, or become, our enemies: we deny them, we look down on them, we avoid them and sometimes we turn on them and clash with them with incredible ferocity. Yet those standing before us aren't our hell; they're our paradise. They become our hell when we don't become their paradise. If egotism is the destruction of the image of God within us, then turning towards other people is what destroys egotism and restores our health before God. The worse and more despicable others appear to be, the more that opening our heart to them cures our own sickness.

A learned Metropolitan writes: 'No form of love is freer and no freedom is identified so closely to love than that for one's enemies (...) love that doesn't expect any return (...) is real grace, that is freedom (...). It's only when love comes together with freedom that we have healing'.

My dear brothers and sisters, Saint John Chrysostom comments on today's Gospel reading saying: 'For he did not say "Do not hate", but "Love"'. He goes on to state that we need to be careful in our progress towards higher things. When we're badly treated, we shouldn't retaliate. Nor should we hate the people who injured us; instead we should love them. Even more: we should do good to them and entreat God on their behalf. On this spiritual ladder we have much labor and a great struggle before us, but our conscience won't let us rest until we've experienced love as a gift and miracle from God.

Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save him, the Lord shall raise him up"

- James, 5: 14-15

	Abp. Nathaniel Mat. Valeria Fr. Jim	Abp. Melchisedek Mat. Sasha Fr. Ray	Abp. Michael Mat. Suzanne Mat. Joanne	Fr. Michael Mat. Laryssa	
Allison	Elaine	Charles	Bernadette	Janet	Katie
Sandi	Stephanie	Sophie	Nancy	Chrystyna	Damian
Noah	Emma	Henry	Natalia	Peter	Ashley
Mary-Evelyn	Bryan	Gregory	Debbie	Nancy	Mike
Donna	Kevin	Nick	Anne	Nick	Agnes
Robert	Mary Etta	Cory	Sharon	Kara	Michelle M.
Helen	Sandy	Kenneth	Jaida	Scott	Jon
Bill	Sam	Betty	Jerry	Allan	Julie
Charles	Dakota	Kathy	Sue	Debbie	Ruth
Mary-Elizabeth	Darcel	Jennifer	Mary	Karis	Jeremiah
Lisa	Thelma	Shane	Mary Ann	Peter	Lawrence
Jonathan	Tammy	Kathie	Chris	Larry	Matthew Julie
Betty Lou	Renée	Alexandra	Roxanne	Alexis	Gordon
Izzy	James	Curtis	Lita	Suzanne	Shirley-Ruth
George	Jean	Dale	Allen	Steven	Jim
Mitch	Johnnie	Charles	Nancy	Annette	Darren
Johnnie-Mac	David	Agnes	Barbara	Katherine	Joseph
Jan	Larry	Daniel	Monica	Dwain	Michael
Magdalena	Dorothy	Francesca	Kara	Andrew	Tim
Taissia	Daniel	Barbara	Mary Ann	Dave	Ashley
James	Eric	Mary-Louise	Barbara	Denise	Rachelle
Andy	Andrea	Amanda	John, Jr.	Mike	Jean
Ann	Mark	Samantha	Susan	Mary	Maria
Robert	Tim	Don	Mary Ann	Judith	Roxanne
Phyllis	George	Mary	Heidi	Dee Ann	Christine
Jeanne	Tim	Samantha	Bernie	Gene	Kim
Eleanor	John	Dave	Chuck	Anna-Sophie	Betty
Ray	Helen	Maryann	Julia	Jim	Antoinette
Shirley	Greg	Megan	Bob	Ann-Marie	Marie
Walt	Edward	Shaun	Hayes	Sue Y.	Donna
Betty	Robert	Jennifer	Ron	Linda	Gloria
Judy	Richie	Ray	McKenzie	Brady	Betty
Richard	Josephine	Shirley	Sandy	Karl	Gail
Janet	Tammy	Donna	John S.	Paige	Michelle B.
Pastor Dave	Keith	Johannes	Marcella	Linda	Gladys
Tammy	Jodi	Nancy K.	Rod	Larry	Ansley
Marsha	George	Louise	Jessica	Rob	Matthew
Michelle N.	Mike				

Do you have prayer intentions? Remember you may add or remove intentions at any time. You do not have to be members of our parish, or even Orthodox to be placed on the list!



LOVING VS. COMMODIFYING

By: Fr. Anthony Perkins

Summary of the Gospel (“The Rules”): Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Offer yourself without expecting anything in return. Love your enemies. This is the way God is (and you should be thankful for that!).

Missing the point: It is hard for us to live the way we should. From our time in Eden to now, we have failed, and the consequences to our hearts, our families, and our world have been disastrous. One of our challenges is that we do not see things as they really are. We do not see their beauty and we do not see how things are connected. Even for things that are ugly and hard, we do not see the potential for beauty and the potential for blessings. Instead of seeing things in their full splendor, we evaluate them based on what they mean for us; what we can get from them.

We were designed to bring out the best in everything and everyone; to heal those that are hurt and to build up those who are already well towards perfection. But instead of this, we just want to know what we can use things for and what we can get out of people.

We are like a hungry man in the middle of a feast who insists on eating his seed corn. It’s destructive and we need to change.

Adam and Eve: Commodifying what they were meant to love: I mentioned Adam and Eve. Think of how they fell. One of the ways to understand this (from St. Nikolai Velimirovich) is that they turned the thing they were meant to tend – the garden – into a commodity; from something that deserved respect and the greatest of care to something that was useful primarily as food. Even the thing God told them not to eat became a commodity to them: they wanted what it offered. And remember what they learned? That it “tasted good.” What a loss.

Hear me well: Adam and Eve were meant to eat the things that grew in the garden, but the availability of food was really just a side-effect (a “positive externality”) of being a good steward. They got it all wrong when they put what they wanted from the garden before their love for it. Instead of tending the garden, they tended to themselves. They forgot about beauty; they forgot about connectedness; they forgot about service.

And We Commodity EVERYTHING! We are so much worse than they were; our commodification of people and things in this world knows no end. We are always looking for an angle; looking for the best deal.

Again, don’t mishear me: being frugal is part of being a good steward of our resources, but we are missing a side-effect for the main point. Men should not love their wives because they hope for something in return, they should love their wives because they want to help nurture them to perfection (but I am not speaking of marriage but of the Church). Christ does not love us because He wants something from us. He does not sacrifice Himself for us in hopes of getting help with His plan to restore beauty to this world. As we become perfect as God is perfect, we will help Him with this plan; but He sacrifices Himself for us because He sees the potential beauty within us and wants it to grow. He does it because He loves us.

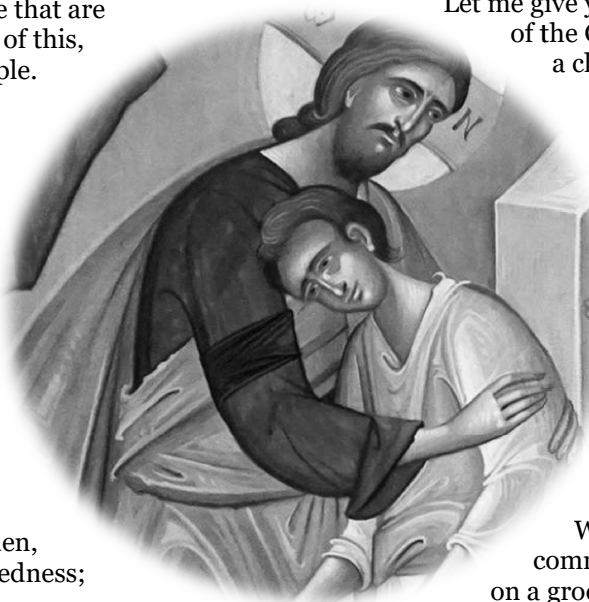
We have to stop looking at one another as things to be used, things that either bring us pleasure or pain. We have to see one another the way God sees us.

More on Blindness: Commodification leads to a lack of proportion: Surely one of the ways we have cursed ourselves with our blindness is that we cannot see the beauty that emanates from all of God’s creatures; the blessings present in every moment.

Why is this so hard? Why are we unable to enjoy the fruits of God’s love for us? Why don’t we see things the way they are? This blindness really is a curse; it pulls us further away from our purpose and robs us of the joy we were meant to have.

There are so many examples in our lives where we are blind to miracles. Yes, the problems are there, but they are so minor compared to the miracles!

Let me give you one example that is so big it cannot help but make this point. It is the example of the Church. Some of you are frustrated in coming here. You think of this as a hall, not a church. Are we really so blind to God’s wonders? Have we no sense of proportion?



God works in this place, it is His very Body and Blood that are offered here – do you understand the magnitude of this miracle? If you complain about the setting, then I know you do not. Complaining about worshiping here is like the man who is dying of poison complaining to the doctor because the cup containing the necessary antidote to the poison is blue instead of green.

Have we lost our minds?

Similarly, some people complain about Confession, saying things like; “why do I have to go to the priest for confession?” Here God has given us a way to rid our hearts of the sin that has accumulated in and polluted them, and we complain about the way He has told us to do it. Seriously? Complaints about the length of services, the fasting requirements, the extra prayers we are to say... Really? Do you see the lack of proportion?

We have turned even the Church, the vessel of everything good and true, into a commodity, something to be judged, to be measured, to be evaluated like some product on a grocer’s shelf.

Is it any wonder that we do the same thing with our spouses, our children...our enemies?

Conclusion: Love without reservation: Do you begin to see the point? God has worked so many wonders in our lives, and we ignore them.

Love without reservation, without expecting anything in return. The irony is that if you tend this world in love, you will receive in return. As the Lord says in almost the next breath, if you really love, if you really give of yourself without reservation, then “it shall be given unto you in return; a good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over...” (St. Luke 6:38).

I hope that today’s Gospel will open your eyes and change your hearts. There is beauty in this world; it is full of God’s blessings.