



Sunday, August 2, 2020

Tone 7

Gospel: St. Matthew 14:14-22

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

8th Sunday after Pentecost / Translation of the Relics of the Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople , and the finding of the Relics of the Righteous Nikodemos, Gamaliel, and Abibas

AUGUST Bulletin Sponsor:

Father Andrew in memory of my Aunt, Rose Bartek

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, August 2

9:15 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy
Outdoor Social

Wednesday, August 5

6:30 pm: Great Vespers

Thursday, August 6

9:30 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy

Saturday, August 8

4:00 pm: Great Vespers

Sunday, August 9

9:15 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy
Outdoor Social

(NOTE): You must let Fr. Andrew know if you want to attend any service or the social. Right now we are allowed 18 people max.

AUGUST SPECIAL COLLECTION



414 Mission Road • Kodiak, AK 99615

ARCHBISHOP PAUL'S VISIT

*Friday & Saturday
August 14-15*

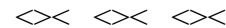
His Eminence, Archbishop Paul, is planning to be here for our Patronal Feast Day on Friday night, August 14 and Saturday, August 15. Following Liturgy we will have an outdoor social with just drinks. Please make your reservation early for there is limited seating.



110 E Main Street, Marblehead, OH 43440
www.holyassumptionmarblehead.org

PRAYERS

Due to the stressful, unsettled and unforgiving times we currently live in, I believe the following prayers are very much needed in our lives.



Prayer of St. Ephrem

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk. *(Full Prostration)*

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. *(Full Prostration)*

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen. *(Full Prostration)*

O God, cleanse me, a sinner *(12 times)*.
And recite prayer one more time.

The Jesus Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God
have mercy on me, a sinner.



The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Rectory 419-798-4591 / Cell 570-212-8747
info@holyassumptionmarblehead.org

AUGUST BULLETIN AND CANDLE SPONSORS

Bulletin: (\$50) From Father Andrew in memory of my Aunt Rose

Chandelier: (\$50) From Joe and Valerie in memory Dorothy Czuha

Altar Candles: (\$50) From Joe and Valerie in memory Howard Bailey & Damian Bailey

Candles on the Tomb: (\$25) Father Andrew in memory of my cousin, Pani Gizella

Eternal Light & Icon Screen: (\$25) From Joe and Valerie in memory of LaVerne Schutt & Violet Bargdill

SCHEDULES

WEEDING & WATERING AROUND CHURCH

Week of August 2	Jean Hileman
Week of August 9	Open
Week of August 16	Open
Week of August 23	Open
Week of August 30	Open

TENTATIVE READERS

Sunday, August 2	Tim
Thursday, August 6	Natalie
Sunday, August 9	Joe
Saturday, August 15	Natalie
Sunday, August 16	Teri
Sunday, August 23	Tim
Sunday, August 30	Natalie

TENTATIVE SINGING

Sunday, August 2	Natalie & Fred
Wednesday, August 5:	Natalie & Tim
Thursday, August 6	Natalie & Basil
Sunday, August, 9	Natalie & Tim
Friday, August 14:	Natalie & Susan
Saturday, August 15	Natalie & Susan
Sunday, August 16	Natalie Laura
Sunday, August 23	Natalie & Fred
Sunday, August 30	Natalie & Basil

NOTE: Anyone that wants to be added to, or subtracted from, any of these lists please let Fr. Andrew know.



ON-LINE GIVING UPDATE

I am happy to report that our On-Line Giving platform is up and running & already bearing fruit! Glory to God! *(These numbers are not reflected in the "Other Income From July.")*

I encourage all of you to check it out and sign up. It is simple and easy.

Fr. Andrew

Week of June 29:	\$229.15
Week of July 6:	\$176.95
Week of July 13:	\$152.19
Week of July 19:	\$244.50

MONTHLY TITHING ONLY JULY

Goal Pledged per month: \$4,600

Sunday, July 5	\$ 853
Sunday, July 12	\$1,233
Sunday, July 19:	\$1,133
Sunday, July 26:	\$1,263
TOTAL FOR THE MONTH : \$4,482	

OTHER INCOME FROM JULY

Sunday, July 5: \$36 Candles; \$45 Vigils; \$100 Cemetery; \$50 Bulletin

Sunday, July 12: \$47 Candles; \$50 Altar candles; \$50 Chandelier; \$105 Vigils; \$25 Eternal Light & Icon Screen candles; \$200 (Sp. Collection) St. Vladimir's Seminary; \$25 Food Pantry; \$175 Restoration; \$250 No Halupki Festival Campaign that came in the mail

Sunday, July 19: \$22 Candles; \$65 in Vigils; \$50 Special Collection ; \$45 Bookstore; \$25 No Festival

Sunday, July 26: \$22 Candles; \$75 Vigils; \$25 Special Collection; \$100 restoration; \$1,960 No Halupki Festival Campaign that came in the mail

PRAYER LIST Updated 7-29

Clergy:

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius
His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman
John Duranko (Father's home pastor)
James Gleason (Father's Spiritual Father)
Moses Barry / Joseph Gibson
Emilian Hutnyan / Vladimir Lecko
Myron Manzuk / Peter Tutko
Sub-deacon Wylie Meath

Matushkii:

Pani Patricia Duranko /Irena Korolenko
Virginia Lecko / Maura McCartney
Sonya Tutko

Parishioners / & their Family:

John Beadle (Elcishko)
MaryAnn Cook (Cousin to Twarek's)
John Richard Elchisco
Ruthe Flewelling
Debbie Garnek (Roddie's sister)
Michael Glovinsky (Basil's nephew)
Heidi Golob
Shirley Gresh (Wife of Ernest)
Julia Guzy
Joseph Habegger (Laura brother-in-law)
Nancy Hanon (Cassell)
Barb Heffernan
Charisse Hileman
Alice Jackson (Mazurik)
William Jappsen (Diane T.)
Kris Kollar (Fr.'s cousin)
Betty Kovach
Kristen (Cassell's daughter)
Terri Lariccia (Fr's cousin)
David LaValle (Fr.'s cousin)
Helen Lis
Greg Mazur
David Mazurik
Judy Mazurik (Paul Mazurik's)
Child Stella Miller
Janet Monak
Richard Monak
Katelyn Pipenur (Niece of Jean)
Earl Rindfleisch
Helen Jean Rofkar (Elchisco)
Joe Rose
Sonya Rose
Ron Royhab
Maryann Royhab
Steven Schirtzinger (Soski)
Christy Schutt (Joe's sister)
Christi Soski
Peter Truta (Jean H's cousin)

Diane Tryon
Greg Tryon
Tom Twarek
Katie and her baby Bodhi
(Cassell's daughter-in-law)
Katherine & her new born
Elizabeth Lew-Ellen (Fr.'s cousin)
Sarah and her unborn Child
(Laura's daughter)
Brittany And her unborn baby
(Fr's cousin)

Other Requests:

Alexia
Dawn Barton (Golob)
Carol Bernier (Golob)
Delores Danchisen
Layne Demkosky
Paul Demkosky (Fr's friend)
Betty Dubbert (Kovach)
Marge Dziama
Mary Dziak (Twarek)
John Esposito (Chicago)
Matt Essex
Ben Franklin (Laura friend)
James Geisman (Twarek)
Theodore Geletka
(St. Michael Broadview
Heights' choir director)
Brad George (Christi's friend)
Donald Gresh (Basil)
Janice (Chicago)
Elliot Joy (Police chief's son)
Andrea Joy (Kovach)
Tommy Leonchik (Fr's friend)
Jake Lipstraw (Twarek)
Mark Ludvik (Guzy)
Anna Maiani (Friend of Wayne)
Mark Masica (Kovach)
Pauline Meath (Fr's)
Cole Miller (Cassell)
Doug Millinger (Kovach)
Karen Muzyka (Fr's friend)
Tim Nash (Royhab)
Charlie Nowak (Avery's)
Beth Reinhard (Diane friend)
Chris Reinheimer (Bruno's)
Elvis Reyes (Fr.'s friend)
Arby Shenesky(Pastor Bob's sister)
Matthew Sterling (Tyron)
Andrea Szabo (Sonya friend)
Devin Thomson (Jamestown)
Janice Timko
George Timko

Philip (Andy) Timko
Steve Turinsky (Twarek)
Chuck Wiedenhoft (Twarek)
Loren Welch
Rachel (Darlene M.)
Mollie & her unborn baby
(Fr.'s friend)
Zoland Zile

Military:

Craig Cassell, Nathan Brown, Alena
Grabavoy, Alex, Jake Ellithorpe

Captives:

Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Arch-
diocese of Aleppo)
Archbishop John (Syriac Archdio-
cese of Aleppo)

The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid
workers in & around Syria; Those
suffering persecution in Iraq, Syria,
Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and through-
out the world

For Your Prayers

Julia Guzy (96 ½ yrs old)
1601 Church Rd
Marblehead, OH 43440

Diane Tryon
109 Joslyn Street
Arcadia, OH 44804

Please remember our shut-ins,
especially now during this
National crisis.

40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

August 2: Protodeacon Gregory
Norris

August 9: Police officer from
Toledo

August 16: Alice Sutko

August 23: 2 police officers from
TX/ Police officer from the State of
Washington / Elizabeth Mercier /
Robert Hritsko

**Procession of the Honorable Wood of the
Life-Giving Cross of the Lord (First of
the three “Feasts of the Savior”
in August)
Commemorated on [August 1](#)**

The origin of this Feast is explained in the Greek *Horologion* of 1897: "Because of the illnesses which occur during the month of August, it was customary at Constantinople to carry the Precious Wood of the Cross in procession throughout the city for its sanctification, and to deliver it from sickness."

On the eve (July 31), the Cross was removed from the imperial treasury and placed it upon the Holy Table of the Great Church of Hagia Sophia (which is dedicated to Christ, the Wisdom of God). From August 1 until the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, there was a procession throughout the entire the city, and then the Cross was placed where all the people could venerate it.

In the Russian Church this Feast is combined with the remembrance of the Baptism of Rus on August 1, 988. In the "The order of services for the holy, catholic, and apostolic Great Church of the Dormition," which was compiled in 1627 by order of Patriarch Philaret of Moscow and All Rus, there is a similar explanation of the Feast: "On the day of the Procession of the Precious Cross there is a Cross Procession with the Sanctification of Water, for the enlightenment of the people, in all the towns and places."

Knowledge of the day of the actual Baptism of Rus is preserved in the Chronicles of the XVI century: "The Baptism of the Great Prince Vladimir of Kiev and of all Rus took place on August 1."

In the current practice of the Russian Church, the service of the Lesser Sanctification of Water on August 1 takes place either before or after Liturgy. Because of the Blessing of Water, this first Feast of the Savior in August is sometimes called “the Savior of the Water.” Along with the Blessing of Water, there may also be a Blessing of Honey (thus it is also called “the Savior of the Honey), because on this day, the newly-gathered honey is blessed and tasted.

**Translation of the relics of the Protomartyr
and Archdeacon Stephen from Jerusalem to
Constantinople**

Commemorated on [August 2](#)

The Transfer of the Relics of the Holy Protomartyr Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople took place about the year 428.

After the holy Protomartyr Archdeacon Stephen was stoned by the Jews, they left his holy body unburied to be devoured by the beasts and birds. After a day and a night the renowned Jewish teacher of the Law, Gamaliel sent people to take up the body of the Protomartyr. Gamaliel buried him on his own property, in his own tomb, not far from Jerusalem.

When Lord’s secret disciple Nikodemos died, Gamaliel also buried him near the grave of Saint Stephen. Afterwards Gamaliel himself, who had been baptized with his son Abibas, was buried near the grave of the Protomartyr Stephen and Saint Nikodemos.

In the year 415 the relics of the saint were uncovered in a miraculous manner and solemnly transferred to Jerusalem by Bishop John and the bishops Eutonium of Sebaste and Eleutherius of Jericho. From that time healings took place from the relics.

Afterwards, during the reign of holy Emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450), the relics of the holy Protomartyr Stephen were transferred from Jerusalem to Constantinople and placed in the church of the holy deacon Laurence (August 10). When a church dedicated to the Protomartyr Stephen was built, the relics were transferred there on August 2. Saint Stephen’s right hand is preserved in the Serapionov chamber of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra.



AUGUST Celebrations

Anniversary	Birthday	
Fr. Michael & Pani Mellissa Chendorain	2- Jessica Issler	19- Daria Rivera
18- Philip & Trudy Ellmore	2- Hayes Twarek	20- Zach Collins
20- Thomas & Charisse Hileman	4- Meiriam Dardovski	21- Kaylee Calzone
21- Fr. Gregory & Matushka Xenia Brunner	5- Darrin Feldman	23- Michael Odehnal
28- Fr. Eli Bremer Priestly ordination	9- Elaine Basala	28- Trisha Monschein
30- Fr. Peter & Pani Bernadette Zarynow	10- Irene Vangeloff	28- Ricky Whitham
	12- Layne Demkosky	29- Archbishop Michael
	13- Frank Batura, Jr	31- Sharon LaVallee
NAMESDAY	13- Ed Kusinski	31- Fr. Emilian Hutnyan
8-9: Retired Metropolitan Herman	14- Nick Mazurik	
8-9: Retired Bishop Matthias of Chicago	15- Matt Kovach	
8:13: Retired Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco		
8-23: Archbishop Irene of Canada		
8-30: Archbishop Alexander of Dallas		

If there are those names to be added or removed, please contact Fr. Andrew. He would like to list all members of your family Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

1 Corinthians 1:10-18 (Epistle)

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Matthew 14:14-22 (Gospel)

And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

AUGUST Reposed

4- Rose Bartek (1984)	19- Fr. George Dyak (1995)	28- Rev. Dr. William Worstall (2011)
7- Dorothy Romig (2017)	21- Fr. Paul Herbert (2016)	29- Pani Gizella Mihaly (1975)
11- Carl D. Essex (2014)	21- Sophia Monak (2004)	31- Larry Noon (2014)
12- Fr. Stephen Jula (2014)	22- Fr. Peter Molchany (1990)	Michael Onyock (1931)
13- Andrew Millie (1958)	23- Martha Brooks (2010)	Michael Hritsko (1934)
15- Archpriest John Matusiak (2019)	24- Damien <i>cousin of Valerie S</i> (2019)	

THE PRIEST
ANONYMOUS AUTHOR

- The priest is a man of dust, with weaknesses and diseases, desires and ideals.
- The priest eats a lot or a little, is crammed by the feasts or is his guts hungry after 6 hours of an empty heart service.
- The priest has doubts and anger, misunderstandings and consequences with himself.
- The priest feels, cries, prays.
- The priest can be tempted, has sins, has past complaints, memories, and old wounds.
- The priest has a body, full of headaches and saddles scars from too much suffering.
- The priest is a man in enormous pressure every day. He stands before God, he breaks Christ the Emperor of ages in his hands of clay, he always shares himself with the Savior's Blood, he listens to terrible sins at confession, takes care of the dying and reads to the incurable sick.
- The priest kneels before the Holy Table and touches his forehead against the Master's chest, listening in amazement to the heartbeat of God.
- The priest is a dustball full of the dew of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY FOR HIM!

VIGILS - 7-26

Basil Glovinsky (3) Health and recovery to Dick & Janet; Loving memory of Robert Hritsko; Anniversary blessings #11 to Mary & Dan

Laura Kovach (4) God's blessings and healing to everyone battling or suffering during the COVID-19 pandemic; God's blessings of peace and healing for our country; For healing or health of Sarah and her unborn baby, Betty, Betty, Ron, Julia, Andrea, Mark, Joe, Margi, Dana, Bodhi, Chuck, Steve, Jeanne, Mary, Joe, and Sonya; Special intentions.

Sandy Martin (2) Anniversary blessing to Jennifer and Tim; Special intentions

Jim Mazur(2) In memory family and friends; For health of family and friends

Twarek (8) God's Blessings and Peace; In loving memory of mom, 7/21; In thanksgiving for 46th wedding anniversary 7/27; In loving memory of Sue Parker, 7/24; For health and recovery of Ron; For health and recovery of Mary Dzizk, JC Giesman, Loren Welch; For health and recovery of Sonya; For the health of Tom Twarek, Jeannie Roth Snowball, Sarah Swanton, Jason, Nancy, Margi & Joe, MaryAnn & Bob, Judy, Chuck, Steve, Bohdi, Liz, Joe, Julia, Diane, Stella, Jake, Helen; Special intentions

Time to Take a Break

I have decided I am going to take a brief break from issuing my weekly notes. I am not particularly pleased with how our Family Ministry website has developed to this point. I was hoping my weekly notes would spur responses and questions from people in the Diocese, and to date there have been very few. It is hard for me to write on matters when I don't have a clear sense that what I have been writing has been hitting home and promoting discussion and further questions. Since I have not received that much feedback, I have decided to take this break.

I was also hoping people would submit guest articles, and that has not happened in quite a while. Efforts have been made to request that people submit guest articles, but that request has not been answered. I would like to spend some time with the Editorial Board of the website and focus on what we can do to improve upon the website content and how we might do a better job of connecting with people in the Diocese to obtain feedback. I am sure the Covid pandemic we have all been dealing with since March of this year has impacted part of this. I ask that you be patient and pray for us as we make the effort to refocus our efforts and redefine our tasks.

Asking your forgiveness, and conveying the Lord's blessing upon you,
Archbishop Paul



Commitment vs. Convenience The Dormition Fast



Yesterday August 1 2020 we began the observance of the relatively brief Dormition Fast that prepares us for the celebration of the Great Feast (Our Patronal) of the Dormition of the Mother of God on August 15. And, as with every fast, we once again are presented with a challenge and a choice. In this instance, the Dormition Fast presents us with a choice between “convenience” and “commitment.” We can choose convenience because of the simple fact that to fast is decidedly inconvenient. It takes planning, vigilance, discipline, self-denial, and an overall concerted effort. It is convenient to allow life to flow on at its usual summer rhythm, which includes searching for that comfort level of least resistance. To break our established patterns of living is always difficult—something we would only contemplate with reluctance. So, one choice is to do nothing different during the Dormition Fast—or perhaps just doing something minimal, as a kind of token recognition of our life in the Church. Such a choice may not yield in terms of further growth in our life “in Christ.” It may, rather, mean a missed opportunity.

Yet, the choice remains to embrace the Dormition Fast, a choice that is decidedly “counter-cultural” and one that manifests a conscious commitment to an Orthodox Christian “way of life.” Such a commitment signifies that we are looking beyond what is convenient toward what is meaningful. It would be a choice in which we recognize our weaknesses and our need precisely for the planning, vigilance, discipline, self-denial and overall concerted effort that distinguishes the seeker of the “mind of Christ” which we have as a gift within the life of the Church. That is a difficult choice to make, and one that is perhaps particularly difficult within the life of a family with children who are often resistant to any changes. However, such a difficult choice has its “rewards,” and such a commitment will bear fruit in our families and in our parishes. (If embraced legalistically and judgmentally, however, we will lose our access to the potential fruitfulness of the fast and only succeed in creating a miserable atmosphere in our homes.) It is a choice that is determined to seize a good opportunity as at least a potential tool that leads to spiritual growth.

Combining the “convenient” with our “commitment” within our contemporary social and cultural life is, to some degree, an option. We often don’t allow the Church to “get in the way” of our plans and goals, and that may be hard to avoid in the circumstances and conditions of our present “way of life.” It is hard to prevail in the never-ending “battle of the calendars.” The surrounding social and cultural milieu no longer supports our commitment to Christ and the Church. In fact, it is usually quite indifferent and it may even be hostile toward such a commitment. Though we may hesitate to admit it, we find it very challenging not to conform to the world around us. But it is never impossible to choose our commitment to our Orthodox Christian way of life over what is merely convenient – or simply desired. That may just be one of those “daily crosses” that the Lord spoke of – though it may be a stretch to call that a “cross.” This also entails choices, and we have to assess these choices with honesty as we look at all the factors that make up our lives. In short, it is very difficult – but profoundly rewarding – to practice our Orthodox Christian Faith today!

The heart of a sincere Orthodox Christian desires to choose the hard path of commitment over the easy (and rather boring?) path of convenience. During the Dormition Fast, we now have the God-given opportunity to escape the summer doldrums that drain our spiritual energy. With prayer, almsgiving and fasting, we can renew our tired bodies and souls. We can lift up our “drooping hands” in an attitude of prayer and thanksgiving. The Dormition of the Theotokos has often been called “Pascha in the summer.” It celebrates the victory of life over death—or of death as a translation into the Kingdom of Heaven. The Dormition Fast is our spiritually vigilant preparation leading up to that glorious celebration honoring the Mother of God and contemplate our own entrance into the Kingdom of God. “Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold; now is the day of salvation!” [2 Corinthians 6:2].

What Does God Look Like? Father Michael Gillis, Holy Nativity Orthodox Church, Langley, BC

*Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down!
That the mountains might shake at your presence.* (Isa. 64:1)

A common question people ask a priest goes something like this: “If God is real, why isn’t it obvious to Everyone?”

One way I begin to answer such questions is by saying something like this: God is obvious to everyone—as obvious as the air we breathe. But just as we easily take for granted and no longer notice the air we breathe (unless there are some unusual pollutants in the air or we are having trouble breathing), so too we easily ignore the obvious reality of God. The only exception to this tendency to ignore the obvious is when we intentionally pay attention. When I intentionally pay attention to my breathing, I notice the air. Similarly, unless I work at paying attention to God, I can easily ignore Him.

Many of us, however, would rather that God’s presence be less easy to ignore. Like Isaiah, we want God to tear open the heavens so that no one can deny the reality of the Creator. But this is the very thing God does not want to do. Archimandrite Vasileios says that “He exists as if He did not exist. He intervenes as if He were absent, out of respect for His creature.” God respects His creation so much that He treats the creation as He Himself would be treated: with freedom. God does not come to us in any way that would overwhelm us, that would strip us of freedom and force or coerce us to obey and love him. In fact, once obedience is forced, it ceases to be obedience—not the obedience of relationship, the obedience that a mother wants from her child or a lover expects from his beloved. Forced obedience is mere conformity to outer criteria. God does not want that, for it is no foundation for genuine relationship.

Neither does God want a forced love, a necessary love, a love that must be because there is no choice. The only love God wants is that love that is freely given. The freedom God gives us is the freedom befitting God Himself. As I said above, God treats us as He would be treated. Were God to manifest His power, we would be overwhelmed. We would not understand it. We would be much like the children of Israel, who shuddered at the foot of Mount Sinai

While the mountain itself quaked, but before forty days were passed, they had already begun to worship a calf made of gold. We would be in awe of the power, not the Person. We would tremble at the manifestation, but be unable to apprehend the Person behind the Manifestation.

God comes to us with humility. God comes as a still, small voice. God comes as an infant in a manger. God humbles Himself and becomes a human being so that we can come to know Who He is, His personality, what God is like. Archimandrite Vasileios puts it this way: “I—the [One who is] beyond-being, come down, I empty myself, I approach you, I become one with you in order to make you my own; in order to save you by teaching you things untaught. By saying to you through my conduct that ultimately, what is great, unapproachable and terrible in me is not the power, the inconceivable magnitude, but the ineffable love, the kindness of beauty and the condescension of humility that is manifest in the way I behave.”

The manner in which I exist is the kenotic mode of love and sacrifice. Do not be afraid of my power, then. You should be afraid of my ineffable goodness and humility. You should be afraid, not because I threaten you, but because I respect you more than you deserve or understand.” [The Thunderbolt of Ever-Living Fire, p. 50] God teaches us about Himself by his conduct, by the way He behaves. God respects us. God grants us the freedom worthy of gods. And this, not God’s might, is what we should fear. God lets me have what I want. You might object: “No He doesn’t! I seldom get what I want.”

That is because you want what is not possible. You want corn without planting. You want flowers without gardening. You want love without sacrifice and self-control. You want to sow folly but reap wisdom. You want reality to be something different from what it is. No, this is not possible, not for creatures. God gives us freedom, and we build houses on flood plains. God gives us freedom, and we build houses without basements in tornado country. God gives us freedom and we give guns to boys and fill their minds with hatred. God gives us freedom and then we call the consequences of our exercise of that freedom “the wrath of God.”

But even this suffering, this experience of what is called the wrath of God, even this—and perhaps especially this—reveals God to us, the God who became man and suffered. In our suffering we can, if we are willing, come to know the God who also suffered, the God who suffered all of the consequence of sin, all of what we call the wrath of God. God suffered as **Con’t Pg 9**