



Saturday, January 24, 2021

Gospel: St. Luke 18:35-43

Tone 8

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11

33rd Sunday after Pentecost / Ven. Xenia of Rome and her two female servants / Martyrs Babylas (Vavila) of Sicily, and his two disciples: Timothy and Agapius / St. Macedonius, Hermit, of Syria

JANUARY Bulletin Sponsor:

By Father Andrew, In memory of my father, George

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, January 24

9:05 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy / followed by Annual Meeting

Wednesday, January 27

Noon: Akathist to St John Chrysostom

Friday, January 29

6:30 pm: Akathist to St Basil

Saturday, January 30

3:00 pm: Great Vespers

Sunday, January 31

9:05 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy

(NOTE): You must let Fr. Andrew know if you want to attend any service. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to any service.



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Holy Assumption Church will be held Sunday, January, 24 immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

This year due to Covid-19 we will be holding the meeting in the church. You must make a reservation to attend.

We have 24 members in good standing. A quorum is 13.

This year we will be holding a vote on amending the By-law on council members.

Only members in good standing can voice their opinion and vote. Please plan to attend this very special meeting.

JANUARY CANDLE & BULLETIN SPONSORS

Bulletin: (\$50) From Fr. Andrew - In memory of his dad, George

Chandelier: (\$50) From Valerie S.- In memory of her mom, Violet Bargdill

Altar Candles: (\$50) Peter & Judy - In memory of Peter's father & uncles, Peter James, Robert & Michael

Candles on the Tomb: (\$25) Fr. Andrew - In memory of his God-mother, Helen

Eternal Light & Icon Screen: (\$25) Open

FEBRUARY CANDLE & BULLETIN SPONSORS

Bulletin: (\$50) From Fr. Andrew - In memory of his Grandmother, Justina

Chandelier: (\$50) Open

Altar Candles: (\$50) From Fr. Andrew - In memory of First Carpatho-Russian Bishop, Metropolitan Orestes

Candles on the Tomb: (\$25) From Fr. Andrew - In Memory of his relatives deceased in month of Feb.

Eternal Light & Icon Screen: (\$25) From Athanasia - In memory of Kurtis, Bobbie, Margaret, Gori, Jeanette, DorothyAnn, Edward, and unborn infants Michael, George, & Alexander.

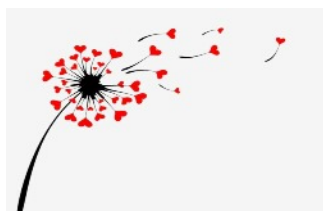
TENTATIVE READERS

Sunday, Jan 24

Terri

Sunday, Jan 31

Tim



JANUARY 2021: MONTHLY TITHE ONLY

Goal Pledged per month: \$4,825

Sunday, Jan. 3: \$1,055

Sunday, Jan 10: \$1,280

Sunday, Jan. 17: \$1,200

MONTHLY TOTAL TO DATE: \$3,535

JANUARY, 202: OTHER INCOME

Goal for the month in this category: \$2,670

Sunday, Jan. 3: \$10 candles; \$80 Vigils; \$100 Donations; \$25 Candles on the Tomb; \$260 Holy Day Collections; \$50 Bulletin

Week Total: \$525

Sunday, Jan. 10: \$35 Candles; \$85 Vigils; \$320 Holy Day donations; \$41 Bookstore; \$50 Bulletin; \$50 Altar Candles

Week Total: \$581

Sunday, Jan. 17: \$10 candles; \$40 Vigils

Week Total: \$50

MONTHLY TOTAL TO DATE: \$1,156

RESTRICTED FUND DONATIONS RECEIVED

Sunday, Jan. 10: \$100 Building Fund; \$20 Food Pantry; \$115 OCMC Special Collection

Sunday, Jan. 17: \$20 OCMC Special Collection

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.

40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

Jan. 24: Gene Warren

Feb. 7: Methodist Pastor from TX / Archpriest Rodion / Police officers killed in Capitol riots

Feb. 21: James Doyle

Feb. 28: Rosie Foster & Police officer from Toledo / Archpriest Joseph Gibson / Mitred Archpriest Daniel Ressetar



CATASTROPHIC RELIEF FUND

Purpose of fund: To provide some small financial assistance to a parishioner, family member or community member who has suffered a catastrophic event.

Funds will be offered at the discretion & blessing of the Rector and the discretion of the Board.

This money can also be used for outreach programs in the parish

**LITURGICAL ATTENDANCE FOR
JANUARY 2021**

Thursday, Dec. 31: 9 attended the Vespers for the Feast Day & the Molebian of Thanksgiving

Friday, Jan. 1: 6 attended Liturgy

Saturday, Jan 2: 8 attended Vespers

Sunday, Jan. 3: 15 attended Liturgy (2 guests); 12 received Communion

Monday, Jan. 4: 7 attended Liturgy for Fr.

Andrew's father, George

Tuesday, Jan. 5 am : 7 attended Royal Hours & Vesperal Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, Jan. 5 pm: 13 attended Vigil & Great Blessing of Water

Wednesday, Jan. 6: 8 attended Liturgy & 8 received Communion

Saturday, Jan 9: 6 attended Vespers

Sunday, Jan. 10: 17 attended Liturgy (1 guest) / 15 received Communion

Saturday, Jan. 16: No Vespers

Sunday, Jan. 17: 15 attended Liturgy & 12 received communion

PRAYER LIST Updated 1-20

HIERARCHS: His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman

CLERGY: John Duranko (Father's home pastor); James Gleason (Father's Spiritual Father); Moses Barry; Gregory Grivna; David Hanes; Emilian Hutnyan; Joseph Von Klarr; Vladimir Lecko; Peter Tutko; John Zabinko / Deacon Paul Gansle

MATUSHKII: Pani Patricia Duranko; Virginia Lecko; Maura McCarntey; Snezanna Ruzic; Sonya Tutko; Margaret Zabinko

PARISHIONERS & THEIR FAMILIES: Jonah Adamcio; John Beadle (Elchisco); Trisha (Cassell Daughter); Maryann Cook (cousin to Twarek); John Richard Elchisco; Michael Glovinsky; Shirley Gresh (Glovinsky); Ben Grosik (Hritsko cousin); Judy Hritsko; Julia Guzy; Joseph Habegger (brother-in-law Kovach); Ellie Hritsko (Aunt); Charisee (Hileman); Kris Kollar (Fr.'s cousin); Betty Kovach (Jim's mother); Terri Lariccia (Fr's cousin); David LaValle (Fr's cousin); Helen Lis (fr David's mom); Child Stephanos (Loizos); Jim Mazur; Barbara Mazurik; Child Stella Miller (Elchisco); Katelyn Pipenur (Hileman niece); Earl Rindfleisch (Tina's dad); Helen Jean Rofkar (Elchisco); Joe Rose; Sonya Rose; Ron Royhab; Maryann Royhab; Patricia Schritzing (Christi's mom); Steven Schirtzinger (Christi's brother); Christy Schutt (Joe's sister); Dacia Snider (Hileman); Christi Soski; Doris Toth (Hritsko cousin); Peter Truta (Jean's cousin); Diane Tryon; Greg Tyron; Tom Twarek; the child Bodhi (Grandson Cassell)

OTHER REQUESTS: Mark Britton (Hritsko); Joel Butcher (Son); Ernest Cornwell (Hritsko); James Crane (Hritsko); Baby Finn (Cassell); Child Ezra Bottoms; Bredan (Child from Norwalk); Marge Dziama Fr's Dziama's daughter (former pastor); Mary Dziak (Twarek); Ruthe Flewelling, (Former parishioner); Ben Franklin (Kovach); James Geisman (Twarek); Theodore Geletka (Choir director St. Michael's Broadview Heights); Donald Gresh (Glovinsky); Elliot Joy (Former Police chief's son); Andrea Joy (Kovach); Ann Marie Krynock (Timko); Meinda Kuzara (Archbishop's list); Jake Lipstraw (Twarek); Mark Ludvik (Guzy); Mark Masica (Kovach); Pauline Meath (Fr's friend); Karen Muzyka (Fr's friend); Charlie Nowak (Twarek); Sandy Scafaria (Hileman); Arby Shenesky (Pastor B. Daughter); Bob Snyder (Twarek); Gary Steyer (Twarek); Janice Timko; Philip Andy Timko; George Timko; Cheryl Wieber (Twarek); Chuck Wiedenhoft (Twarek); Loren Welch (Fr's friend)

MILITARY: Alex, Nathan Brown, Craig Cassell, Jake Ellithorpe, Jordan Fulton

CAPTIVES: Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo), Archbishop John Syriac Archdiocese of Aleppo, The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers in & around Syria; Those suffering persecution in Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and throughout the world



BUILDING / RESTORATION FUND

Our 125th Anniversary is coming!

Fund Purpose: To collect funds to pay for the restoration, repair and beautification of the building and parish room. This will avoid using general funds which are earmarked for budgetary items.

Please consider contributing generously to the *Building/Restoration Fund*.

For Your Prayers

Julia Guzy (97)
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.

VIGILS - JANUARY 17, 2021

Laura Kovach (4) In memory of Deborah Comstock. May her memory be eternal; Birthday blessings to Sarah; Safe travel for Ben and other friends; For health of Betty, Joe, Julia, Andrea, Wendy, Mark, Dana, Bodhi, Wayne, David, JC, Tony, Kathie, John, and Andrew.

Sandy Martin (1) Special intentions

Twarek (8) For God's grace and blessings on our country; Health and recovery of Barbara Mazurik, Bob Snyder, JC Geisman; Health and recovery of Father Emil, Betty Kovach and Tony Monastra; God's blessing to Cole; Health of Jewel, Natalie and Morgan and their unborn babies; God's blessings and good health to Ezra Bottoms; Health and recovery of Jim, Cheryl and Laura; Health of Matt, Wayne, Tom, Ron, Mary, Loren, Joe, Sonya, David, Julia, Tom, Jason, Margi & Joe, Betty, MaryAnn & Bob, Judy, Chuck, Bohdi, Liz, Diane, Stella, Jake, Helen; Special intentions

Archbishop Paul's Travel Schedule: January 11 to February 8

Christ the Savior, Chicago, IL,

January 23rd to 24th

- *Ordination of Sub Deacon Andrew Bender to the Diaconate*

St. Nicholas, Joliet, IL, January 30th to 31st

Priest James Doyle

Priest James (Iakovos) Doyle fell asleep in the Lord on January 12, 2021. Father James was attached at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL, but had served a number of Orthodox communities in the Chicago Deanery during various transitional periods. For the past 16 years he had been serving on loan at Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Hegewich, IL under the Greek Metropolis of Chicago. He was 80 years old.

He was born on August 2, 1940, to James and Marion Doyle, in Providence, Rhode Island, and is survived by his sister, Rose, of North Providence.

He attended Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, New York City, from 1958 to 1960. He enlisted in the United States Army, in which he served until 1967, among his duties, studying Russian and other Slavic languages in the Army's language schools.

After his Honorable Discharge from the Army he went to Paris, France, to study at Saint Sergius Theological Institute, from which he graduated in 1969, with additional studies at Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium. While at Saint Sergius, he worked closely with Father Nicholas Afanasiev, the noted Orthodox theologian.

Father James was ordained to the Diaconate on June 25, 1969 at Saint Sergius, and then to the Priesthood, on June 28, 1969, at Saint Alexander Nevsky, Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Paris, by Archbishop George, of Syracuse. Over the years of his ministry, he received a number of special recognitions, including his elevation to Archpriest, and his award of the Jeweled Cross.

After his ordination he served parishes in Brussels, Belgium, until his return to the United States in 1975, to teach Patristics and Old Testament at Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Seminary, South Canaan. He served at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Leavitt Street, Chicago, from 1979, concluding his ministry there as its Dean, in 1983. From 1983 until his death, he was on staff at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, fondly remembered there by a generation of fellow staff, faculty, and students.

He assisted at a number of parishes in the Greater Chicago area over the years, for the last twenty years serving in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. Of very special note was his service at Assumption Church, Hegewich, from 2004, to very shortly before his death. Of all his pastoral ministries, none was closer to his heart. He was deeply loved by the congregation, there, and it was, for him, a cherished spiritual home.

With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Paul, Father James will be buried from the parish he served, Holy Assumption, by His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of the Greek Metropolis of Chicago.

May Father James' memory be eternal!

JANUARY Celebrations

Anniversary	Birthday	
11- Missy & Andy Schlotterer 1-24-2015: Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa 26- Fr. James Gleason - Anniversary to the Holy Priesthood <div style="text-align: center;">Namesday</div> 1-2: Retired Bishop Seraphim of Sendai	1-Jim Kovach 3- Samuel Koren 4- John Starcher 7- Susan Guzy 7- Lueleta Dardovski 8-Fr Silouan Rolando 8- Mat. Melania Adamcio 8- Barbara Mazurik	11- Toussaint Jones 13- Mary Elizabeth Blackford 14- Lauren Jerome 15- Brent Jones 23- Susan Beskid 25- Frank Batura 30- Stephanie Warnke 30- Bob Whitham Jr. 31- Julie Dardovski

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.

The Mitred Archpriest Daniel Ressetar

The Mitred Archpriest Daniel D Ressetar fell asleep in the Lord on the morning of January 20, 2021. He was born March 28, 1927 in Edwardsville, PA to Archpriest Dimitri and Matushka Margarita Ressetar. He married Theodora (Prislopsky) in 1958. A graduate of Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, he was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop John (Garklavs) of Chicago and to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Dmitri (Magan) of Philadelphia in 1958. Father Daniel served parishes in Eastern Pennsylvania and as a United States Air Force Military Chaplain. Continuing in his family's tradition, he was an accomplished church musician and singer. He was awarded the Saint Innocent Award (Silver Class) by the Holy Synod in 2003 and the Mitre in 2017. He retired in 2006 and remained active at Christ the Savior Church in Harrisburg, PA as pastor emeritus.

He is survived by his wife, Matushka Theodora, and his three sons, Nicholas, Gregory, and Alexander.

JANUARY Reposed

3- Mat. Marilyn Federoff (2019) 3- Larry Naiser (2019) 4- Margaret Reavley (1965) 4- George Bartek (1983) 4- Baby Clyde Madison (2020) 5- Russell (2019) Heidi's relative 5- Donald (2019) Wayne's Relative 5- Maria Semionow (1981) 6- Helen Pender (2016) 8- Bishop Mark of Boston (2018) 11- Anna Tomko (1960) 15- Archpriest Pavel Soucek (2009) Former Pastor 20- Joshua Zdinak (2016) 21- Daniel Kowal (2006) 21- Philip Kobb (2018)	21- Fr. Michael Shuster (2020) 22- Fr. John Stefanik (2000) 23- Helen Beadle (1988) 23- Fr. Michael Sopoliga (2009) 23- Deborah Pribanic (2020) 25- Jane (2019) Ron's Aunt 29- Anna Kravetz (1973) 29- Marjorie Kowal (2003) 29- Ernest Gresh (2020) 29- Rick Schlotterer (2020) 30- Archpriest John Mason (2019) 31- Edward Bartek (1983) Sara Rose (2005) Andrew Matway (1906) William Gratson (1908) Eva Hritsko (1908)
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Remarks during the Zoe For Life Zoom Event from His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon

On Sunday, January 17, 2021, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon delivered the following address at the annual Prayer Service for the Unborn sponsored by ZOE for Life!

Good evening, Very Reverend Fathers and Beloved Faithful in Christ,

Christ is in our midst!

I am honored to be with you this evening and to have an opportunity to address you on the important subject of the sanctity of life. Let me begin by offering my sincere thanks to Paula Kappos, Kathy Kovalak, and all the staff of Zoe for Life for their invitation, as well as for their strong and effective witness to the sanctity of life in very tangible and helpful ways. They are truly a pan-Orthodox organization that deserves our prayers and our encouragement, as they seek to concretely support and help women and families dealing with crisis pregnancies.

I am also grateful to Father Stephen Callos and the community of Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Cleveland Heights for hosting this Zoom event and for providing a venue for Father Stephen and Father Alexander Garklavs to lead us in the prayer service we just participated in. It is always good to remember the importance of turning to prayer when dealing with crucial matters, such as the senseless and irrational ending of life in the womb.

It is our task as Orthodox Christians, and as Orthodox parishes, to be witnesses to the sanctity of life throughout North America. I would like to speak with you this evening about two ways in which you and I can be such witnesses.

Prayer

The first we have already accomplished this evening, and that is prayer. Although the pandemic has restricted much of our activity in society, it has not prevented our ability to pray. In many ways, perhaps our challenging times have helped us to pray more in our homes and in the secret chambers

of our hearts. Technology has also made possible opportunities such as this evening, enabling us to gather and to pray together, even when we are physically separated.

The pandemic has been difficult for all of us, perhaps in different ways and for different reasons. But one of the common ways it has affected us all is that it has been difficult to do things. We live in a world that compels us to do things, and with very few opportunities to do things, we have felt even more helpless

Usually, around this time of the year, Orthodox Christians would gather in Washington, DC, to march with thousands of others in the Annual March for Life. The goals of the March are to bring an end to the legalization of abortion, and to educate our nation about the reality that what is in the womb is truly a human person.

The March itself will be virtual this year, but this should not make us feel like we are not doing anything, or that we are unable to contribute and witness to life in a real and productive way. This brings us back to the action of prayer. We should remember the words of our Lord who says: “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Lk 11:9–10).

If we truly want to do something about abortion, we, as the Church and individually, ought to turn to Christ again and again in prayer. By this action of prayer, we can ask our Lord to bring reason to all those who support abortions, and repentance and divine mercy to all those who have been involved in abortions.

The world often denies the power of prayer and claims that “thoughts and prayers” are not sufficient in the face of social injustice. But we must never lose hope in the efficacy of the fervent and effectual prayer that arises from our hearts.

In the Old Testament, we find several examples of the power of such prayers of supplication. In Genesis, Abraham, the father of all those of faith, supplicates God to spare the city of Sodom for the sake of the few righteous who live there (Gen 18:16–33).

Begging for God’s mercy on the sinful city, Abraham prays to God that he save the entire city, if only 50 righteous men are found living there. He then bargains with God, lowering the necessary amount of righteous to save the city, first to 45 righteous, *Con’t Next Page*

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then to 40 righteous, to 30 righteous, and to 20 righteous. In the end, Abraham intercedes with enough fervor that God promises that He will not destroy Sodom if but 10 righteous men are found there.

By this example, we see that Abraham, through fervent and honest prayer, was able to ask for God's mercy. In kind, when we offer our prayers with such fervor, we can obtain the Lord's great mercy for the sake of others.

This kind of powerful prayer does not just belong to ancient times, but is also accessible to us today. One of our modern saints, the Saint and Elder Porphyrios of Athens, who died in 1991, would often speak of the power of fervent prayer. His well-known biography, *Wounded by Love*, records Saint Porphyrios' teaching that in prayer it is not length that matters as much as intensity. He relates the following example:

A monk was walking in the wilderness one day and there he met another monk. He greeted him and asked how things were going in the village nearby. The local monk replied: "We're suffering a dreadful drought, and we're at our wit's end." The first monk asked: "Have you prayed?" The second monk answered: "We have, but it did not rain a drop." The first monk said: "It seems then that you haven't been praying intensely enough. Let's pray to God here and now to ask for His help."

And so, the two monks prayed together, more intensely, and in but a few minutes a cloud appeared. It quickly grew bigger and bigger, and darker and darker. Soon after, Saint Porphyrios says, it began to release buckets of rain.

It is likely, knowing the humility of Saint Porphyrios, that he himself was the first monk in this story. But either way, the saint explains that this miracle happened because the prayer was earnest and intense. The two monks truly cared about the people of the village, and they did not want them to become desperate or starve, so they prayed fervently, sincerely, and with faith—and God quickly brought the rain.

We find many examples of such prayer and the miraculous effects of prayer in the Old Testament, as we see for example when God brought miraculous rain in the time of Noah, and also in the time of Elijah. The

cycle of the prophet Elijah, in particular, is relevant to our discussion this evening because it speaks not only of prayer but of the way prayer works.

In Elijah's case, we know that, like the story of Saint Porphyrios, his prayer brought an end to the drought. But we should also point out that it was Elijah's prayer that also began the drought: "And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, 'As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word' (1 Kg [3 Kg] 17:1).

He prophesied this drought because of the sins of the nation and as a means of bringing them to repentance. However, the fathers of the Church point out several things. First, Elijah was not being mean-spirited by this action, but he himself suffered with the people during the drought. Others fathers, such as Saint Romanos the Melodist, point out that, much like Abraham bargaining with God, Elijah also enters into a battle of sorts with God.

In a paradoxical way, it is God, in this case, who is trying to convince Elijah to be merciful. As presented in one of Saint Romanos' *Kontakia*, God feels that it is Elijah who is being too strict with the people, and he tries to get Elijah to be more merciful. At the same time, God respects the word of the prophet and will not force him to change his mind. This is why, for example, he sends a raven to feed Elijah during the drought. Ravens are known to be cruel to their own children and so, by sending the ravens to feed the prophet, God is trying to get Elijah to understand that he should show mercy on the people by bringing an end to the drought.

I point this out simply to remind us that our own prayers, our own attitude, our own actions are significant. Certainly, we know that God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-seeing. But we also know that He respects our freedom. So, in our present-day society, when we find ourselves in the midst of a spiritual drought and in circumstances where we might feel powerless in the face of the world, we should remember that, in many significant ways, God is waiting for us to take action.

Prayer is not simply a pious action that religious folk do, hoping for a miracle from God. The kind of prayer we engage in is not a retreat *Con't Next Page*

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from social action, but is, in fact, the strongest expression of social action. This is what the prophets, like Elijah, remind us, and it is a good reminder when dealing with the ignorance and confusion of our own day.

For example, many people today who are pro-abortion believe that they are also pro-scientific; we who hold strongly to our faith are by default assumed to be anti-scientific, illogical, and irrational. But as Christians we follow our Lord Jesus Christ, who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” as recorded in the Gospel of John (Jn 14:6). In the same Gospel of John, our Lord is given the title “the Word”; in Greek, the Logos. Logos means Word, and it also means reason. It is the root word of our word “logical.”

So to follow Christ is true, reasonable, and logical. And therefore, when we pray, we are concretely following the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Because of this, we should not be afraid to engage with society rationally, logically, and reasonably. At the same time, we should know that prayer is one of the most visible and effective means of doing this.

As it is explained in the First Epistle of John: “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him” (1 Jn 5:14–15).

But again, such prayer is not to be taken as a magical formula by which we try to change God’s mind, or change the minds and hearts of other people. Rather, we pray for repentance, humility, and love—for ourselves, and for all of mankind. The true miracle and the real societal change is the transfiguration that takes place in our own hearts.

In other words, even if we pray as intensely as we should, even if all Orthodox Christians throughout the world prayed together for the transformation of society, such transformation still requires a voluntary change in the hearts of human beings.

Deeds

And this brings me to my second point. In addition to being bold in prayer, and in being bold in the Truth,

we must be bold in doing good Christian deeds. Our deeds cannot be separated from our prayers. In fact, it is precisely through our deeds that we show that our prayer is working—not on other people, but on ourselves. Our prayers have an impact on other people when they see our prayer lived out in a good, kind, humble, and loving Christian way of life.

From the most ancient days of Israel, God’s repeated command, throughout the Scriptures, was for His people to do good. He told Israel and us, again and again, to defend the defenseless and to protect the most vulnerable. He told us, again and again, to care for widows, orphans, and all others in need of mercy and help.

All of this can only be accomplished through our deeds; not deeds done in isolation, but rather deeds inspired by fervent prayer. So our fervent prayers lead us to care for widows, to care for orphans, to care for children in the womb, and to care for those who have undergone abortions.

This is why the work that goes on at pregnancy crisis centers, women’s shelters, and other centers of social work is so crucial. These are the places in our own local community where we can put our prayers into concrete action for the benefit of society.

To give two brief examples from our local region, the center that has organized this event, Zoe for Life, does the laudable work of working with women both during and after crisis pregnancies. Also, the Martha and Mary Maternity Ministry in Chicago helps women find housing and other material needs during pregnancy. There are other excellent ministries such as these, all throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico, in which we can engage in doing the good work of helping at-risk women.

When we take time out of our lives to do such good deeds, and to give of our own funds to support such works, we do the will of God and we extend the reach of our prayers. It requires an effort on our part, but life in the Church always requires some kind of effort.

As the Holy Apostle John the Theologian says in his First Epistle: “Whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth” (1 Jn 3:17–18). ***Con’t Next Page***

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So, as faithful followers of Christ, we should pray, we should make the truth known, and we should do good deeds. We do this for the sake of the unborn, for the sake of all mothers, and especially for those who have been wounded by abortions.

May our Lord Jesus Christ give us the courage, the boldness, and the wisdom to accomplish all this for His glory and for the salvation of all mankind.

Venerable Xenia of Rome, and her two female servants

Commemorated on January 24

Saint Xenia of Rome, in the world Eusebia, was the only daughter of an eminent Roman senator. From her youth she loved God, and wished to avoid the marriage arranged for her. She secretly left her parental home with two servants devoted to her, and set sail upon a ship. Through the Providence of God she met the head of the monastery of the holy Apostle Andrew in Milassa, a town of Caria (Asia Minor). She besought him to take her and her companions to Milassa. She also changed her name, calling herself Xenia [which means "stranger" or "foreigner" in Greek].

At Milassa she bought land, built a church dedicated to Saint Stephen, and founded a woman's monastery. Soon after this, Bishop Paul of Milassa made Xenia a deaconess, because of her virtuous life. The saint helped everyone: for the destitute, she was a benefactress; for the grief-stricken, a comforter; for sinners, a guide to repentance. She possessed a deep humility, accounting herself the worst and most sinful of all.

In her ascetic deeds she was guided by the counsels of the Palestinian ascetic, Saint Euthymius. The sublime life of Saint Xenia drew many souls to Christ. The holy virgin died in 450 while she was praying. During her funeral, a luminous wreath of stars surrounding a radiant cross appeared over the monastery in the heavens. This sign accompanied the body of the saint when it was carried into the city, and remained until the saint's burial. Many of the sick received healing after touching the relics of the saint.

Following the death of Saint Xenia, first one of her former servants died, then the other. They were buried at the saint's feet.

Colossians 3:4-11 (Epistle)

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.



Luke 18:35-43 (Gospel)

Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to

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.

Apostle Timothy of the Seventy Commemorated on January 22

The Holy Apostle Timothy was from the Lycaonian city of Lystra in Asia Minor. Saint Timothy was converted to Christ in the year 52 by the holy Apostle Paul (June 29). When the Apostles Paul and Barnabas first visited the cities of Lycaonia, Saint Paul healed one crippled from birth. Many of the inhabitants of Lystra then believed in Christ, and among them was the future Saint Timothy, his mother Eunice and grandmother Loida (Lois) (Acts 14:6-12; 2 Tim. 1:5).

The seed of faith, planted in Saint Timothy's soul by the Apostle Paul, brought forth abundant fruit. He became Saint Paul's disciple, and later his constant companion and co-worker in the preaching of the Gospel. The Apostle Paul loved Saint Timothy and in his Epistles called him his beloved son, remembering his devotion and fidelity with gratitude.

He wrote to Timothy: "You have followed my teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, and patience" (2 Tim. 3:10-11). The Apostle Paul appointed Saint Timothy as Bishop of Ephesus, where the saint remained for fifteen years. Finally, when Saint Paul was in prison and awaiting martyrdom, he summoned his faithful friend, Saint Timothy, for a last farewell (2 Tim. 4:9).

Saint Timothy ended his life as a martyr. The pagans of Ephesus celebrated a festival in honor of their idols, and used to carry them through the city, accompanied by impious ceremonies and songs. Saint Timothy, zealous for the glory of God, attempted to halt the procession and reason with the spiritually blind idol-worshipping people, by preaching the true faith in Christ.

The pagans angrily fell upon the holy apostle, they beat him, dragged him along the ground, and finally, they stoned him. Saint Timothy's martyrdom occurred in the year 93.

In the fourth century the holy relics of Saint Timothy were transferred to Constantinople and placed in the church of the Holy Apostles near the tombs of Saint Andrew (November 30) and Saint Luke (October 18). The Church honors Saint Timothy as one of the Apostles of the Seventy.

In Russian practice, the back of a priest's cross is often inscribed with Saint Paul's words to Saint Timothy: "Be an example to the believers in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12).

St. Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria Commemorated on January 18

Saints Athanasius and Cyril were Archbishops of Alexandria. These wise teachers of truth and defenders of Christ's Church share a joint Feast in recognition of their dogmatic writings which affirm the truth of the Orthodox Faith, correctly interpret the Holy Scripture, and censure the delusions of the heretics.

St Athanasius took part in the First Ecumenical Council when he was still a deacon. He surpassed everyone there in his zeal to uphold the teaching that Christ is consubstantial (homoousios) with the Father, and not merely a creature, as the Arians proclaimed.

This radiant beacon of Orthodoxy spent most of his life in exile from his See, because of the plotting of his enemies. He returned to his flock as he was approaching the end of his life. Like an evening star, he illumined the Orthodox faithful with his words for a little while, then reposed in 373. He is also commemorated on May 2 (the transfer of his holy relics).

HOME BLESSINGS

Please contact me if you are interested in getting your home blessed. To date 8 homes are scheduled to be blessed.

