

# Holy Assumption Orthodox Church

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

V. Rev. Archpriest Andrew Bartek, Rector

Parish Council President: Matthew Adamcio



**Saturday, January 31, 2021**

**Tone 1**

**Gospel:** St. Matthew 25:14-30

**Epistle:** Colossians 3:12-16

**34th Sunday after Pentecost / Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cyrus & John, & with them Martyrs Athanasia and her daughters: Theoctiste, Theodotia, and Eudoxia, at Canopus in Egypt**

## JANUARY Bulletin Sponsor:

*By Father Andrew, In memory of my father, George*

### *Liturgical & Events Schedule*

#### **Sunday, January 31**

9:05 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy

1:00 pm: Local March For Life in Port Clinton

#### **Monday, February 1**

6:30 pm: Great Vespers

#### **Tuesday, February 2**

9:15 am: Hours Followed by Divine Liturgy

#### **Friday, February 5**

6:30 pm: Akathist to St Photius

#### **Saturday, February 6**

3:00 pm: Great Vespers

#### **Sunday, February 7**

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.

### 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 31	Tim
Sunday, Feb 7	Terri
Sunday, Feb 14	Tim
Sunday, Feb. 21	Terri
Sunday, Feb 28	Tim

### 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

**Thursday, Jan 7:** 6 attended Akathist Hymn

**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

**Wednesday, Jan. 20:** 3 attended the Akathist Hymn

**Saturday, Jan. 23:** 9 attended Vespers

**Sunday, Jan 24:** 18 attended Liturgy / 15 Received Communion

**Wednesday, Jan 27:** 5 attended Akathist Hymn

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## 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

Sunday, Jan. 24: \$1,673

MONTHLY TOTAL TO DATE: \$5,208

## 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

Sunday, Jan. 24: \$25 candles; \$95 vigils;

Week Total: \$120

MONTHLY TOTAL TO DATE: \$1,276

## RESTRICTED FUND DONATIONS RECEIVED

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

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

Sunday, Jan. 24: \$25 Food Pantry; \$250 OCMC; \$100 Restoration

## 40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

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

Feb. 21: James Doyle

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

March 7: Archimandrite Alexander [Cutler] / Jane

## 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

## VIGILS - JANUARY 24, 2021

Susan Guzy (2) Special intentions

Laura Kovach (4) For healing of Joe, Andrew, and JC; Safe travel for Ben and other friends; For health of Betty, Ben, Julia, Andrea, Wendy, Mark, Dana, Bodhi, Wayne, David, Kathie, John F, Matthew, Amanda, and Jack; Special Intentions

Sandy Martin (1) Special intentions

Ron & Bobbie Royhab (1) Special intentions

Twarek (8) For God's grace and blessings on our country; Health and recovery of Ann Turinsky, Bob Snyder, JC Geisman; 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, Special intentions



# PRAYER LIST Updated 1-28

**HIERARCHS:** His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman

**CLERGY:** Mykola Bondarchuk; 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:** Olga Bondarchuk; Pani Patricia Duranko; Virginia Lecko; Maura McCarnthey; Snezana Ruzic; Sonya Tutko; Margaret Zabinko

**PARISHIONERS & THEIR FAMILIES:** Jonah Adamcio; John Beadle (Elchisco); Kristen (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); Melinda Kuzara (Archbishop's list); Jake Lipstraw (Twarek); Mark Ludvik (Guzy); Mark Masica (Kovach); Pauline Meath (Fr's friend); Karen Muzyka (Fr's friend); Vitaly Muzyka-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 125<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Remembering Mother Alexandra on the 30th anniversary of her repose

The 30th anniversary of the repose on January 21, 1991 of Mother Alexandra, founding abbess of the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, PA. Scion of the Royal Family of Romania, she was born in 1909. After exile from Romania due to its takeover by a Communist regime, she moved to the United States in 1950. A decade later, she began to discern a monastic vocation and entered a convent in France to gain experience as a nun. In 1967, she returned to America to establish a monastery for women, which would have services in English and build up a monastic foundation for the missionary vision of American Orthodoxy. For the next 24 years, Mother Alexandra was abbess of the Monastery of the Transfiguration for over a decade until her retirement, traveled widely for speaking engagements, wrote spiritual treatises and remained the Monastery's spiritual leader until her repose following a brief illness. The Monastery, a flourishing community today, continues to live by her spiritual teachings and promote her legacy by publishing her writings. May her memory be eternal and may her teachings and prayers continue to strengthen the spiritual growth of the Orthodox Church in America.

## Archimandrite Alexander [Cutler]

Archimandrite Alexander (Cutler), former Abbot of the Saint John the Theologian Monastery in Hiram, OH (now ROCOR), fell asleep in the Lord on January 26, 2021 in Milnov, Ukraine, at the age of 78. A long-time priest of the Orthodox Church in America, after his retirement he transferred to the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (MP) at the end of 2014. He served at the Holy Ascension Metochion of the Saint Nicholas Convent of the urban village Mlinov, in the region of Rovno.

Born Richard Paul Cutler in Framingham, MA in 1942, he was ordained to the Holy Diaconate in 1970 and to the Holy Priesthood in 1973 at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago, IL by Archbishop John (Garklavs) of Chicago. He served at Holy Trinity for 10 years until briefly assigned to Saint Mary Cathedral in 1980. He was then assigned to the Saint John the Theologian Skete in 1981. During that time he also served as the confessor to the nuns at Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, PA. He was raised to the rank of Archimandrite in 1997.

His burial will take place in Ukraine.  
May Father Alexander's memory be eternal!

## Colossians 3:12-16 (Epistle)

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

## Join Archbishop Paul in Upcoming Family Life Livestream

His Eminence, Archbishop Paul invites the faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest to join him for the first interactive live stream webinars of 2021 on Family Life at 7:00 p.m. Central Time on Sunday, February 14, 2021. Archbishop Paul will explore the theme, "Who Is God," and he will field questions and answers from participants throughout the interactive webinar.

Register now to participate in the webinar and to receive weekly website updates.

The Orthodox Family Life site offers a detailed, ongoing account of Archbishop Paul's vision with regard to the centrality of the family in the life of the Church. The site features reflections by His Eminence on a variety of related themes, reader questions and comments, and a growing collection of writings by noted guest authors.

## ***FEBRUARY Celebrations***

<b>Anniversary</b>	<b>Birthday</b>	
2-10-1973: Retired Metropolitan Herman	31- Julie Dardovski (January)	14- Mat Ann Lardas
2-14-2004: The Most Blessed Tikhon	4- Nathaniel Bremer	16- David Mazurik
14- Jim & Rita Mazur	5- Christi Soski	16- Silas Issler
18- Joe & Sonya Rose	5- Thomas Hileman	19- Jonah Adamcio
	5- Zoland Zile	20- Julianna Kusinski
	6- Alex Zarynow	22- Wayne Golob
	8- Thomas Hileman	24- Sonya Rose
	10- Fr. Eli Bremer	25- Heidi Golob
	12- Fr. James Gleason	26- Bill Glovinsky
	12- Michael Sumner	26- Pani Bernadette Zarynow
	14- Sandy Martin	27- Andy Schlotterer

*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.*

### **Archbishop Paul's Travel Schedule: Jan 30 to Feb 21**

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

**St. Elizabeth the New Martyr, Chesterton, IN**,  
February 1st / 6 PM Vespers Liturgy Feast of the Lord's Entrance

**Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL** February 6th to 7th

**Ss. Cyril & Methodius, Milwaukee, WI** February 12th to 14th

**St. Raphael Mission, Quincey, IL** February 19th to 21st



### **HOME BLESSINGS**

Please contact me if you are interested in getting your home blessed. To date 9 homes are scheduled to be blessed.

## ***FEBRUARY Reposed***

31- Edward Bartek (1983) (January)	17- Metropolitan Orestes (1977); Stanley Guzy (1986)
2- Nancy Pipenur (2018)	20- Infant Linda Sue Alber (1969); Dc. Mike Cinalli (2020)
3- Ann Sature (2012)	21- Mary Tomka Matso (1956)F; r. Michael Shuster (2020)
5- Peter Kowal (2004)	22- Metro Mazur (1973); Fr. Andrew Hutnyan (2004)
6- Steve Michael Mazur (1970); Elizabeth Kravetz Mc Mahon (1984)	23- George Elchisco Sr. (1961)
12- Glenn Schoonmaker (2002); Lawrence Beck (2018)	26- Elizabeth Millie (1998)
13- Bishop Varlaam (2020)	27- Steve Basala (1985)
14- Rose Polosky (1953)	29- Mary Uka Kosteary (1996)
15- Justina Popodich (grandmother)	Helen Hritsko (1908)
16- Albert Bartek (1952)	Alexandra Brendza (1909)
	Steve Danchisen (1909)

**Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries  
Cyrus and John, and those with them  
Commemorated on January 31**

Saint Cyrus was a noted physician in the city of Alexandria, where he had been born and raised. He was a Christian and he treated the sick without charge, not only curing their bodily afflictions, but also healing their spiritual infirmities. He would say, "Whoever wishes to avoid being ill should refrain from sin, for sin is often the cause of bodily illness." Preaching the Gospel, the holy physician converted many pagans to Christ. During the persecution by Diocletian (284-305), Saint Cyrus withdrew into Arabia, where he became a monk. He continued to heal people by his prayer, having received from God the gift to heal every sickness.

In the city of Edessa at this time lived the soldier John, a pious Christian. When the persecution started, he went to Jerusalem and there he heard about Saint Cyrus. He began to search for him, going first to Alexandria and then to Arabia. When Saint John finally found Saint Cyrus, he remained with him and became his faithful follower.

They learned of the arrest of the Christian woman Athanasia and her three young daughters. Theocliste was fifteen; Theodota, was thirteen; and Eudoxia, was eleven. Saints Cyrus and John hastened to the prison to help them. They were concerned that faced with torture, the women might renounce Christ.

Saints Cyrus and John gave them courage to endure what lay before them. Learning of this, the ruler of the city arrested Saints Cyrus and John, and seeing their steadfast and fearless confession of faith in Christ, he brought Athanasia and her daughters to witness their torture. The tyrant did not refrain from any form of torture against the holy martyrs. The women were not frightened by the sufferings of Saints Cyrus and John, but courageously continued to confess Christ. They were flogged and then beheaded, receiving their crowns of martyrdom.

At the same place they executed the Holy Unmercenaries Cyrus and John. Christians buried their bodies in the church of the holy Evangelist Mark. In the fifth century the relics of Saints Cyrus and John were transferred from Canopis to Manuphin. Later

on their relics were transferred to Rome, and from there to Munchen (Munich) (another account is located under June 28).

Saints Cyrus and John are invoked by those who have difficulty in sleeping.

**Matthew 25:14-30 (Gospel)**

For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

## What do we do with what happened on January 6, 2021?

Two weeks ago I posted about why Jesus needed to be baptized. I then went on to celebrate Theophany Liturgy at Holy Trinity Cathedral. I had a glorious experience. The feast taught me about what community is, as the “worship of the Trinity made manifest.” I truly believe that we find true communion with one another in the waters the Lord sanctified when He entered the Jordan. The waters we prayed over that day became waters of sanctification, salvation, reconciliation, and love.

Then I went home that day only to observe the horrendous sight of our nation’s Capitol being invaded. The Congress needed to suspend their work for a short time to be kept in a place of safety. Thankfully, by evening, the Congress was able to reassemble and continue their work. I felt as if I went from heaven to hell that day.

What do we say to our children regarding this day; especially for those who saw these events unfold before them? First I think we tell our kids that whatever our parties may believe whether Democrat or Republican, there is absolutely no justification for what happened. For a brief period, evil triumphed. We need to speak out against these acts of sedition and rebellion.

Speak to your children about the need to hold accountable those who were involved in promoting this violent, seditious behavior. They showed no respect for the laws of our country or for the Capitol police who sought to enforce the boundary that stood between peaceful protest, and unlawful rebellion when a good number of those people turned into a mob; who then knocked over and crossed those steel railings that were set up for everyone’s safety and protection. This would lead other well-meaning people to cross that threshold not realizing what was going on or what they were getting into.

Finally, and most importantly, let this day be a reminder to make the celebration of Holy Theophany a real priority even it means leaving work and taking children out of school to attend Church and participate in the Great Blessing of Water. It is only in these waters of sanctification that we will ever be reconciled to God and to each other. It is only in

these waters of sanctification that we will understand what a united communion of love is. It is only in these waters of sanctification that we will begin to understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity as the ultimate icon of what real community is.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,

With love in Christ,

The unworthy +Paul

### Dealing with the Beast of Anger, Fr. George Morelli

The spiritual-cognitive component of anger were long recognized by our Church Holy Fathers, Saint Basil the Great recognized the loss of reason in anger. “It makes a man completely bestial...in fact, it does not even allow him to be a man at all, because he no longer has the help of his reason.”

An interesting spiritual issue arises in this context. In order for us to perceive ourselves to be “intruded on” to the extent that it justifies, anger, vengeance, and retaliation, we have to see ourselves as ‘important.’ Saint Basil the Great tells us “Anger nurses a grievance. The soul, itching for vengeance, constantly tempts us to repay those who have offended” (Saint Basil the Great, Homily 10). I am so important, so above others, I have the “right” to act uncharitably toward others.

What is the root of this reaction; the passion and sin of pride. Saint Mark, the Ascetic (Philokalia V. I) wrote: “The passion is strengthened especially by pride. And as long as it is so strengthened it cannot be destroyed...Thus the structure of evil in the soul is impossible to destroy so long as it is rooted firmly in pride.” From the Shephard of Hermas (Book II Commandment 5) who saw the Holy Spirit choked by anger: “For he is choked by the vile spirit, and cannot attend on the Lord as he wishes, for anger pollutes him. For the Lord dwells in long-suffering, but the devil in anger.” Abba (Father) Agathon wrote that anger can produce spiritual death: “An irascible man, even if he is capable of raising the dead, will not be received into the Kingdom of Heaven.” Another holy desert Father Abba (Father) Pimen saw anger as obliterating he who *Con’t Next Page*

## ***Beast of Anger Con't***

would consider himself a monk: “A complaining, vindictive monk, prone to anger, cannot exist.” That is to say that, any who have such faults are not actual monks, even if they wear the schema.”

Mankind is created in the image of God and as creatures of God, we are called to be “like” Him. (Genesis 1:26). The Church Holy Fathers define the image of God in us as our free will and intelligence. To be like Him meant that mankind must choose “the good.” For our first parents, choosing good was to obey their Creator — not to make themselves into gods by tasting the fruit of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). Noting mankind coveted a spiritual power above its created nature Blessed Augustine interpreted this passage to mean that Adam and Eve thought of themselves as having the knowledge of God.

When God further revealed His Will in the form of the Law: the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:6-21), and other proscriptions listed for His people. When the fullness of time had come and God sent His “Only Begotten Son” our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, He revealed to us the fullness of what it was to be “like” Him. Our Lord tells us “And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another” (St. John 13:34, 35).

What greater love could the Father have for us that even though He is God, nevertheless, send His Son to take on our nature so we — all mankind — can be lifted up to Him? “For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son: that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting” (St. John 3:16). Let us ponder some of the things our Lord has told us about love. “If you forgive the faults of others your Heavenly Father will forgive you. If you do not forgive the faults of others, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you” (St. Matthew 6:14-16). “My son your sins are forgiven” (St. Mark 2:5). “If you want to avoid judgment, stop passing judgment” (St. Matthew 7:1).

How do we achieve this love shown to us by the Father and His Son, our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ? Saint Paul tells us: “Get rid of all bitterness, all passion, and anger, harsh words, slander and malice of every kind. In place of these, be kind to one

another, compassionate, and mutually forgiving, just as God as has forgiven you in Christ” (Ephesians 4:31). Our calling as part of God’s creation, as a member of Christ’s body, the Church, is to grow and actualize ourselves; to find those imperfections in us that are barriers preventing us from being “like God”; that prevents us from loving and forgiving. In keeping with Saint Paul’s words, our emotions, such as anger, are just such an imperfection or barrier. By making ourselves less angry we can grow in the love of God and our neighbor.

Current research psychology has helped us understand cognitive structure supporting and triggering anger. Besides aiding in helping us to understand how anger comes about, this research also helps us to employ psychological techniques that can aid in overcoming and preventing anger. The cognitive-behavioral model of emotional dysfunction has been shown to be effective in this regard...

We upset ourselves over people and events, by our “interpretations” of them, thereby making ourselves dysfunctionally angry, anxious or depressed or simply functionally annoyed, concerned and disappointed. If our thinking is clear, rational and non-distorted we have normal feelings like bearable nuisances, caring and livable letdowns. If our “interpretations” are irrational or distorted we get enraged, intensely worried and despondent.

From a spiritual perspective, we are to reflect on the life of our Lord. He was bruised, derided, cursed, defiled, and died for our salvation. He Himself told us: “No servant is greater than his master (St. Matthew 10:24)—why would we expect to be treated any differently than our Lord. It is a blessing if we are treated and honored, but we have no guarantee...”

We can reflect on the words of Saint Mark the Ascetic: “Do you want the tree of disorder—I mean the passion of bitterness, anger, and wrath—to dry up within you and become barred so that with the ax of the Spirit it may be ‘new down and cast into the fire’ together with every vice (Matthew 3:10)...If this is really what you want keep the humility of the Lord in your heart and never forget it...Call to mind Who He is, and what He became for our sakes. Reflect first on the Divine Light of His Divinity revealed to the essence above [the Angels] (Ephesians 1:21)...Then think to what humiliation He descended in his ineffable goodness, becoming in all respects like us who were ***Con't Next Page***

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dwelling in the dwelling of darkness and the shadow of death (St. Matthew 4:16).” Petition our Lord’s help in this way to help restructure.

This “time-out” can be accomplished by something as simple as going to the restroom. Restructuring should also be incorporated into evening prayer, especially during the examination of conscience and prayer for forgiveness of sins. This active approach toward our becoming like Christ is our vocation as Christians. Saint James tells us “So you see, then, it is his actions that a person is put right with God, not by his faith alone” (St. James 2:24). All the wishing or prayer we do, if it does not lead us to actively make ourselves like Christ is empty.

“Since you are God’s dear children you must try to be like Him, Your life must be controlled by love...” (Ephesians 5:1-2). Work, vivified by prayer and sacraments, is the way to advance in our likeness in Christ. Only then will we be able to say with Christ: “Father forgive them for they know not what they do” (St. Luke 23:34). This is true anger management.

Taken from:

<http://saintandrewgoc.org/home/2020/3/11/the-beast-of-anger>

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## **Steps to “becoming” an Orthodox Christian**

**Another Question from the OCA website:** For the past year or so I have been considering conversion to Orthodox Christianity. I have read many things on the internet, as well as a number of books about the Church’s faith, worship and history. What steps would I take to become an Orthodox Christian?

**Answer:** While reading about the Orthodox Christian tradition is certainly important, it is crucial to step—literally—into an Orthodox Christian parish church near you to witness/experience the Church’s worship and fellowship. Doing so will make much of what you have read “come alive,” in the sense of seeing how that about which you have read is actually “lived.” Think of it in the following way. A person can read a dozen books ***Con’t Next Page***

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS TAKEN FROM THE OCA WEBSITE) Cremation**

**Question:** Can you tell me if the Orthodox Church allows cremation? If the answer is no, why? With all my thanks.

**Answer:** According to Byzantine Canon Law, cremation is not permitted. Sources state that the original ban arose out of consideration for the fact that within pagan and possibly gnostic circles cremation was commonly practiced. There was also the implication that through cremation the value of physical creation, and specifically the human body, was denied. [The Church has always stood squarely against dualism.] Of course, we read in the accounts of the early martyrs that the faithful treated the martyrs’ bodies with the utmost respect as they were taken for burial—an early indication that the common Roman pagan practice was shunned by Christians.

Today there are those who would propose that the practice of cremation be explored anew, in light of the fact that the practice’s association with paganism or gnosticism is no longer a reality. Proponents of this line of thinking may also assert that cremation is a less expensive way to dispose of the body than the increasingly expensive—and often non-Christian—burial practices common in many cultures and societies, such as in the United States. However, the vast majority of Orthodox would contend that cremation for whatever reason, and regardless of its detachment from pagan thought or ritual, in every instance denies the value of the human body and of material creation in general. Hence, it is to be avoided as an option.

I have heard of a few cases in recent times where, in extreme cases and for good cause, cremation has taken place with the knowledge of the Church. In each case, however, I have heard that the actual cremation did not occur until after the funeral service at which the body of the deceased has been present. This does not represent standard practice, however, and in each instance there were extenuating circumstances which led the Church to apply the principle of *economia*.

### ***Becoming an Orthodox Christian Con't***

on swimming, but that which he or she has read will not “come alive” until he or she actually gets into a pool. Similarly, a person can read a dozen books on Orthodox Christianity, but that which he or she has read will not “come alive” until he or she actually encounters the Church as the worshipping People of God.

So it would be wise to visit a parish near you, perhaps for the celebration of Vespers on a Saturday evening or the Sunday morning Divine Liturgy. You may wish to call the parish priest in advance to introduce yourself and explain that you will be joining him and the faithful of his parish for the first time, although this is not absolutely essential. In any event, feel free to introduce yourself to and speak with the priest and his parishioners. Your first—and subsequent visits—will help you to discern that to which the Lord is calling you. As Philip said to Nathaniel, “Come and see” [John 1:46].

Assuming that, after subsequent visits, you grow into the conviction that Orthodox Christianity is the fullness of Truth as revealed by Jesus Christ and discern your desire to embrace faith in Our Lord in its fullness, make your desire known to the parish priest, who will initiate the period of instruction and spiritual formation that eventually would lead to your reception into the Church. This could take some time—perhaps a year or more, depending on a variety of circumstances—and should not be “rushed.” Just as we pray that God’s will, not our own, be done, so too we pray that we might embrace the faith in God’s time, not our own. Conversion involves a change or transformation in vision, direction and heart, one rooted in repentance and the acknowledgement of Our Lord as the One Who is “truly the Christ, the Son of the Living God, Who came into the world to save sinners.”

This period of instruction, discernment and spiritual formation also affords you with the opportunity to develop and strengthen your relationship with the parish’s clergy and faithful—those with whom you will worship “in Spirit and truth” and with whom you will share in fellowship as a member of the Body of Christ, the Church. Naturally, it is crucial to “know” what the Church teaches and acquire an “Orthodox mindset” on the intellectual level, so to

speaking, but it is equally crucial to grow in identifying with the People of God, the worshipping community, through fellowship. One who would claim that he or she “wishes to embrace the faith but doesn’t want to get involved with other people and their lives” falls short in his or her understanding of the Church as the People of God and, as such, has yet to make that internal conversion that must take place before one is received into the Church. As Saint Paul reminds us, “so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” [Romans 12:5; see also Ephesians 4:25]. In other words, one cannot embrace Orthodox Christianity without embracing Orthodox Christians.

It also must be noted that embracing the faith involves a “running to” Christ and His Church as the “Ark of Salvation,” rather than a “running away” from something—other than sin. Those who will guide you through your period of instruction and formation surely will help you in this regard.

In time, you will be welcomed sacramentally into the Church and continue your ongoing path to the Kingdom of God.

Hope this helps, and hope that your “journey to Orthodoxy” is filled with every blessing.



### **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.