

Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Christian Church

A Parish of the Diocese of New England of the Orthodox Church in America

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Sunday, January 20, 2019

34th Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 1

Sanctity of Life Sunday

January 20, annually, is the commemoration of, among others, Venerable Euthymius the Great (d. 473 AD), and the Holy Martyrs Innas, Pinnas, and Rimmas (1st c.)

Notes from Fr. John: Sanctity of Life Sunday

Every year, on the Sunday in January nearest to January 22, the Orthodox Church in America marks “Sanctity of Life Sunday.” That date in January is chosen in reference to the fact that the landmark Supreme Court case “Roe vs. Wade” concerning the legality of abortion was officially decided on January 22, 1973.

So, when we mark “Sanctity of Life Sunday,” we are concerned about the issue of abortion, and we take the occasion to speak strongly and without equivocation in opposition to the practice of abortion.

However, the concept of the sanctity of life, while certainly to be applied to the lives of unborn children, is, also, to be applied to the lives of all people. Every human life is a gift from God, and, therefore, is sacred. Every human life is to be protected, nurtured, cherished, and respected. And, this is not simply an issue about what is “legal” or “illegal.” We must never forget that Our Lord Jesus Christ was a victim of the legal system under which he lived. He was not murdered or assassinated. Rather, he was executed, as a common criminal, by the authorities. The Crucifixion was, appallingly, a *legal act*.

Therefore, as Christians we are, of course, to be concerned about what is good and what is evil, about what is right and what is wrong. But, we are, also, as we are able, to involve ourselves in efforts to make sure that our laws, acts, edicts, rules and regulations do not violate the sanctity of life.

These few short notes certainly do not do full justice to the concept of the sanctity of life. Rather, they are an invitation to care about this concept, to explore it, to study it, to pray about it, and to commit ourselves not only to know, but also to become wise, and to act from that place of wisdom.

May God help us, guide us, and have mercy on us.

In Christ,

Fr. John H.

Schedule of Services

- 1/20 Sunday**
NO SERVICE DUE TO SNOW/ICE STORM
- 1/23 Wednesday**
8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)
- 1/26 Saturday**
6:00 PM – Vigil
Followed by Monthly Rite of General Confession
- 1/27 Sunday**
Commemoration of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors who suffered under Totalitarianism in the 20th Century
9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy
(Fr. John will be departing immediately following the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy in order to travel to the Waterbury Parish, where he will preside there at the now twice-rescheduled Annual General Meeting of that Parish.)
- 1/30 Wednesday**
Feast of the Three Holy Hierarchs
8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)
- 2/1 Friday**
Eve of the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord
6:15 PM – Vespers with Divine Liturgy
- 2/2 Saturday**
Feast of the Meeting of the Lord
6:00 PM – Vigil
Followed by Monthly Choir Rehearsal
- 2/3 Sunday**
9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy
- 2/4 Monday**
7:00 PM – Terryville Parish Council
- 2/6 Wednesday**
8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)
- 2/9 Saturday**
5:30 PM – “40th Day” Memorial Service in Memory of Sonya Petroff
6:00 PM – Vigil
- 2/10 Sunday**
Zacchaeus Sunday
9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy
- 2/13 Wednesday**
8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Please pray for all victims of disaster, difficulty and senseless violence throughout the world.

+ THOSE WHO HAVE DEPARTED THIS LIFE: *Memory Eternal!*

Newly Departed

His Grace Bishop Athanasios of Western Kenya d. 1/4/2019
Glen Sheets—Jennifer Wegh's uncle d. 1/11/19
Sonya Petroff—Marilou's sister and our fellow parishioner d. 1/4/2019

Anniversaries of Repose – Memory Eternal!

Mary Cleveland 1/20/1972
Afton Tkachuk 1/21/1958
Natalie Witik 1/21/1988
Anna Stanko 1/21/1990
Julia Maichack 1/21/2012
Isodore Kablesh 1/22/1960
Joseph Duke 1/23/1935
Mary Duke 1/23/1985
Julia Biscoe 1/24/1944
Fotia Veshman 1/24/1939
Michael Susla 1/24/1963
William Glowa 1/25/1987
Olga Wrettick 1/25/2008
Dorothy Gryguch 1/26/1988

THOSE IN NEED OF GOD'S MERCY AND HELP

Persons captive and suffering for the Faith

Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John—hostages in Syria

Those who are sick and suffering

Archpriest Steven Belonick—C. Belonick's brother; suffering terribly in illness
Fyodor (Frank) Guba—increasing sufferings from Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
Dolores Twombly—permanent colon malfunction following colon cancer treatment
Karen—Mary Fomenko's niece; unwell and in need of prayers
child Drew—grandson of friends of the Nimcheks; ongoing treatment for eye cancer

Jadwiga ["Yahd-vee-gah"]—mother of an acquaintance of E. Watras; cancer
Alex—John Dubnansky's brother, suffering permanent effects of stroke
Darlyne—facing health challenges; daughter of Bob and Vera Martin
child Asa—great-grandson of friend of E. Watras; child with developmental challenges
Donna—Ann Sovyrda's niece; kidney disease
Dayrl—Ann Sovyrda's niece; kidney disease
JoAnn—acquaintance of Jeanne Moore; ovarian cancer
MaryEllen—Louine King's daughter-in-law; declining due to Huntington's Disease
Virginia ("Gina")—Elena Watras' sister; unwell and in need of prayers
Anna Szepel—Waterbury parishioner; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Vera—Waterbury parishioner; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Eleanor—Rdr. Joseph Boruch's mother; chronic health challenges
Maria Oraschewsky—now requires dialysis three times a week
Charlotte—Chezelle Serev's mother; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Nina Gorbachev—former parishioner; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Mark—friend of Frank Guba; 2nd phase non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
Michael—friend of Frank Guba; awaiting the possibility of a lung transplant
Carol Johnson—still unwell and in need of our prayerful support
Beverly Kuzmich—had surgery on January 3rd to stabilize broken wrist

Shut-ins and those resident in long-term Care Facilities

Eva Kopcha—at Sheriden Woods, Bristol
Irene Kiehart—Jayne Grasso's mother; now resident in Connecticut
Mary Fomenko—shut-in at home
Robert (Bob)—Patty Nimchek's brother

Expectant Mothers

Breanna and the child to be born of her – The Serevs' niece and her baby

Those traveling and soon to be traveling

Laura Koski—trip to India

Those from among us serving on active duty in the Armed Forces

Joel Orelup—U.S. Navy, hospital corpsman ("medic") serving with the Marines
Joseph Bellmay—a Terryville neighbor; U.S. Marine Corps
Joshua Pcsolyar—fiancé of a niece of Fr. John's; U.S. Army pilot, now in Afghanistan

Birthdays

Emily Serev—Peter and Chezelle's daughter 1/20
Nika Dubnansky—John's daughter 1/20

Notes from Fr. John: *Live in the Moment*

“So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.” (Matthew 6:34)

These words of Our Lord Jesus Christ are part of His Sermon on the Mount, a sermon each of us should take some time to read, often. These words remind us that the only healthy way to live—ethically, morally, spiritually, mentally, physically—is to stay “in the moment.”

We can't control the world around us, and, due to the gift of free will that makes the experience of love possible (for love can only be given and received in freedom), God does not compel behavior, but allows each person freely to determine how he or she will act and speak. What each of us can do is this: We can each take responsible control of our own person, right here, right now, in the moment. Right here, right now, I can speak and act in a moral and ethical, deeply Christian manner.

We may be restricted and constrained in certain ways, by all sorts of realities, including things that come from within our own persons—thoughts and feelings, obsessions and compulsions. Ultimately, however, we are free. We are free to choose well, and, perhaps, to make better choices than we have sometimes made in the past. Those choices must be made right now—in the moment. The past is done. Who knows what the future holds. But, right now, right here, I can choose well. I can act ethically. I can behave morally. I can do these things, strengthened by God and enlightened by His Truth. Saint Paul the Apostle said: “I can do all things [not on my own, but] through him who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13)

A Prayer: Right here, Lord, guide me onto the path of righteous. Right now, Lord, guide my speech and my deeds. Make me, Lord, a locus of Your love. Amen.

NEWS AND NOTES

WEATHER PERMITTING –Next Weekend: Sunday, January 27—the again rescheduled Annual General Meeting in the Waterbury Parish: On Sunday, January 27, Fr. John will be departing immediately following the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy here in the Terryville Parish in order to travel to the Waterbury Parish, where he will preside there at the now twice-rescheduled Annual General Meeting of that Parish. Please pray for the goodness, worthiness, and success of that meeting. Thank you.

Reminder for Members of the Waterbury Parish Council: The Waterbury Parish Council is scheduled to meet on Monday evening, January 21, beginning at 6:00 PM. The meeting will take place in the meeting room located in the Waterbury Parish Community Center.

2019 Pledge Forms: We thank all those who have filled out and returned their Year 2018 pledge forms. We respectfully ask those who have not yet turned in a pledge form to do so, please. If you need a pledge packet, please see Fr. John.

House Blessings are Ongoing: We are engaged in the annual House Blessing season now. If you have not yet scheduled Father John to bless your home, and you would like him to do so, please contact him at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

Fr. John needs help with a project—are you the right person to provide assistance? The Parish Council has authorized the installation of a Simplisafe (www.simplisafe.com) Alarm and Security System in our Church Building. Fr. John requires assistance in designing, ordering, installing, and administering this system. Are you the right person to help him with this task? If so, please, contact him at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

LOOKING (WAY!) AHEAD: Youth Rally, August 12-17, 2019: The Year 2019 Annual Diocesan Youth Rally will take place August 12-17, 2019. Youth Rally is open to all Diocesan Youth who have finished 5th grade and who have not yet celebrated their 18th birthday. Volunteer Adult Staff Members are required to make this event possible. Staff Members will arrive a day early, on Sunday evening, August 11, and stay the entire week. For further information, please contact Fr. John, who will once again this summer serve as Youth Rally Director and Rector.

Weather Related Cancellations: If we need to cancel parish services and/or other events due to bad weather, those announcements will appear on NBC Connecticut Television and on the NBC Connecticut Internet web-site. We will, also, send out an email to the Parish email group and post an announcement on the Parish website. Finally, you can always call the Parish House (860-582-3631) for further information. (*NOTE: If you need to have your email address added to the Parish email group, please contact Fr. John.*)

Online Donations to the Parish: A PayPal Donation “button” is located on our parish website to make online donations possible. Our parish is registered as a charity with PayPal, so we have slightly lower fees connected to the use of that means of receiving donations. For us, PayPal’s fees are 2.2% + \$0.30 per transaction and no monthly fee. (So, for example, a donation of \$100.00 given via PayPal will realize us actual income of \$97.50.)

Needs of the Food Pantry: On an almost constant basis, for the purpose of distribution to its clients, the Plymouth Community Food Pantry needs personal care items such as shampoo, soap, toothpaste, deodorant, toothbrushes, hair brushes, etc. Also, the Food Pantry just about always requires donations of condiments and spices, such as ketchup, mustard, vinegar, cooking oil, BBQ sauce, pickle relish, table salt, black pepper, onion and garlic powder, dried herbs, etc. You can drop off your donations in the basket in the Narthex of our Church, or in the big green bin located by the exit staircase in the Church Basement Social Hall. Every time any of us go grocery shopping, it would be appropriate and worthy of a blessing for us to purchase some items for donation to the Food Pantry.

Readings from Holy Scripture

Scripture Readings for the 34th Sunday after Pentecost, this year January 20

The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Colossians (Col. 3:4-11)

Brethren: When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

The Reading from the Gospel according to Saint Luke (Luke 18:35-43)

At that time, when Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

The Morning Prayer of the Last Elders of Optina*

O Lord, grant that I may meet all that this coming day brings to me with spiritual tranquility. Grant that I may fully surrender myself to Thy holy Will.

At every hour of this day, direct and support me in all things. Whatsoever news may reach me in the course of the day, teach me to accept it with a calm soul and the firm conviction that all is subject to Thy holy Will.

Direct my thoughts and feelings in all my words and actions. In all unexpected occurrences, do not let me forget that all is sent down from Thee.

Grant that I may deal straightforwardly and wisely with every member of my family, neither embarrassing nor saddening anyone.

O Lord, grant me the strength to endure the fatigue of the coming day and all the events that take place during it. Direct my will and teach me to pray, to believe, to hope, to be patient, to forgive, and to love. Amen.

** Note: Optina Monastery, located in Kozel'sk, Russia, 160 miles southwest of Moscow, is an Orthodox Christian monastery for men. In the 19th century it was one of the most important centers for Orthodox Christian spirituality in Russia. It was especially noted for a lineage of fourteen "elders" who resided there in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. All fourteen of these monks are now canonized saints of the Church. These elders were noted for their holiness, spiritual insight, and the pastoral guidance they gave, not only to their fellow monks, but also to the thousands of lay pilgrims who made pilgrimage to the Monastery. This Morning Prayer is attributed to the Elders of Optina—they may not have composed it, but they finalized it in this form, and promulgated and popularized its use.*