

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, November 1, 2020

21st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 4. (6th of Luke) Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian of Mesopotamia, and their mother, St. Theodota. Hieromartyrs John the Bishop and Jacob (James) the Presbyter, of Persia (ca. 345). Martyrs Cyrenia and Juliana in Cilicia (4th c.). Martyr Hermenegild the Goth of Spain (586). Martyrs Cæsarius, Dacius, Sabbas, Sabinian, Agrippa, Adrian, and Thomas, at Damascus (7th c.). Monastic Martyrs Jacob, Jacob the Deacon, and Dionysius, of Prodromou (Mt. Athos—1520).

<https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2020/11/01>

Tragedy Multiplied by Evil

Some Notes from Fr. John Hopko

There are sins we commit that are, to some significant degree, sins of ignorance—often committed unknowingly, and without particular malice, but, rather, as manifestations of weakness. These sins are products of living in the world, being ourselves products of the world. In the world there is tragedy, and we are, on some level, victims of the tragic condition in which we find ourselves. Tragedy can be said to be the category of that which is sad and regrettable, and, also, for us, mere humans, utterly unavoidable. We can't avoid growing older or that we will face sickness and sadness in our lives. We can't avoid death. We are mortal, each and every one of us, and that is tragic.

Evil, however, is more than tragedy. Evil is beyond tragedy. Evil is that which can be avoided. It is not necessary to do evil, rather, we *choose* to do evil. Evil is what happens when we respond to tragedy, not with forbearance and courage and virtue, but rather with words and deeds that multiple the tragic, and make it something bigger and sadder than what it is on its own. Also—and this is much worse—evil is what happens when we move beyond the tragic and, instead, take something fundamentally good and ruin it. The vilest of all evils is that which takes something bright and beautiful and twists it into something dark and ugly.

We might ask: Why would anyone ever take something beautiful and ruin it? Why would we take something lovely and twist it into something dreadful? This is the mystery of sin—especially of those sins committed against the innocent and the vulnerable. Perhaps the only explanation for this kind of sin is that we understand, somehow, that something is beautiful—and, thus, we want to be close to it—but we, in the tragic condition of our brokenness, don't know what to do with it. We don't know how to hold and preserve the good and the beautiful, how to nurture it, how to cherish it, how to make it better and more beautiful than it already is.

Many addictions are sins of this sort—the kinds of sins we commit when we don't know what to do with something good, when we don't know how to manage the good correctly or how to possess it properly.

Drug addiction is a distortion of the fact that we have learned to use various substances to relieve pain and to heal illness. Food addiction is a distortion of the fact that we all know that food is essential to life and can be a wonderful affirmation of the goodness of life. Sexual addictions and other sexual sins are misuses, on the most fundamental level, of the most materially creative aspect of human life. (After all, men and women are meant...

...to be attracted to one another, both for the sake of bonding to one another in a way that brings much richness to life, but also for the sake of procreation. Understanding this both enriches and puts high walls around the possession and practice of human sexuality. A proper understanding of human sexuality both enriches us *and* limits us.) All these addictions and compulsion and obsessions are what happen when we encounter something deeply powerful, meaningful, essential, rich, fine, and vibrant, and we just do not know what to do with it—we don't know how to manage it properly.

What is the remedy for us, who are afflicted by the tragic, and so often respond by multiplying tragedy with evil? What is the remedy for us who see and are attracted to the beautiful, but don't know what to do with it?

The only remedy is to attach ourselves to Jesus Christ, who came into the world to crush evil and overcome tragedy. Only in Christ can we fully understand what is sin and what is beauty. Only in Christ can we learn to respond to that which is tragic with resilience and courage, with wisdom and spiritual strength. Only in Christ can we come to know that which is beautiful and how to possess it without perverting it. Only in Christ can we live overcoming tragedy, escaping evil, and truly understanding beauty and its purposes.

PARISH PRAYER LIST

We pray for all victims of disease, disaster, difficulty, and senseless violence throughout the world, especially in this time of pestilence and civil unrest.

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

First of all, we pray for all the thousands of victims of COVID-19. Memory Eternal!

Newly Departed

His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS (<i>retired</i>)	d. 10/19/2020
Robert (Bob)—Patty N.'s brother	d. 10/21/2020
Helen—Mat Ann S.'s sister	d. 10/11/2020

Anniversaries of Repose – *Memory Eternal!*

Peter Duke	11/2/1913
Vasili Hrabsky	11/2/1935
Katherine Grella	11/2/1990
Paulus Stanko	11/2/1995
Michael Andrash	11/3/1950
Irene Tichon	11/3/1970
Joseph Sholtis	11/4/1934
Paul Leba	11/4/1960
Joseph Braeinow	11/4/1964
Ignati Tihansky	11/5/1938
Gabriel Vabriniaik	11/6/1932
Agafia Shkarypski	11/6/1940
Sophie Johnston	11/6/1956
Harry Popko	11/6/1990
Anna Kurdeka	11/7/1997

THOSE IN NEED OF GOD'S MERCY AND HELP

First of all, we pray for all those suffering due to the present pestilence which is COVID-19, and those working to alleviate their suffering.

Persons captive and suffering for the Faith

Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John—hostages in Syria

Those who are sick and suffering

His Eminence, Archbishop David of Alaska—renal cancer
 Archpriest Michael—former pastor of our parish; reoccurrence of illness
 Fyodor (Frank) G.—suffering from Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
 Dolores T.—permanent colon malfunction following colon cancer treatment
 child Drew—grandson of friends of the Nimcheks; ongoing treatment for eye cancer
 Darlyne—facing health challenges; daughter of Bob and Vera Martin
 Donna—Ann S.'s niece, Deb W.'s cousin; kidney disease
 Dayrl—Ann S.'s niece, Deb W.'s cousin; kidney disease
 JoAnn—acquaintance of Jeanne Moore; ovarian cancer
 MaryEllen—Louine K.'s daughter-in-law; suffering with Huntington's Disease
 Maria O.—dialysis three times a week; recent minor surgery
 Yelena "Lenna" M.—overcoming, by God's grace, serious health challenges
 Katie and Aubrey—a mother and daughter for whom we have been asked to pray

Tanya B.—suffering long-term and lingering effects of brain hemorrhage
 Mark—a profound diabetic for whom we have been asked to pray
 Richard—a person for whom we have been asked to pray
 Walter—an elderly man injured in a fall, for whom we have been asked to pray
 Mary Lynn—friend of Donna O.; battling breast cancer
 Mary—relative of Mike L.; requesting prayers for health
 Simone—relative of Mike L.; requesting prayers for health
 Barbara—friend of Patty N.; unwell and in need of prayerful support
 James B.—husband of a Waterbury parishioner; chronically unwell
 Dorothy F.—Waterbury parishioner; still recovering from a serious surgery
 Vincent—relapse of cancer; relative through marriage of P. Oraschewsky
 Rosie D.—ongoing health issues
 Michael "Mike" L.—ongoing health issues
 child George—9-year-old son of a Kenyan Orthodox priest; quite unwell
 Bill M.—has experienced some health issues lately, please keep in prayer
 Christopher—friend of Kathy Mihailoff; struggling with cancer
 Paula—friend of Jim Liverman; struggling with cancer
 Cheryl—acquaintance of Carolyn P.; recent surgery
 Dimitri—brother of Carolyn P.; health issues
 child Hattie—injured in freak accident; request of a family in our parish
 John K.—recovering from recent hip joint replacement surgery
 Dave—Marilou P.'s cousin; recovering from hip surgery after a fall
 Maryna B.—dealing with some health issues
 Reader Joseph—recent issue with a painful hip joint
 Thomas—Patty N.'s nephew; battling cancer
 Judy—a woman suffering with dementia for whom we have been asked to pray
 Wayne—Donna O.'s father

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

Alex—John D.'s brother, suffering permanent effects of stroke
 Dolores—Bob M.'s mother, resident in long-term eldercare
 Anna—Rdr. John Paul Sz.'s mother; resident in long-term care

Expectant Mothers

Nadia and the child to be born of her—Nadia is Rich and Laura K.'s daughter
 Shelby (Sophia) G. and the child to be born of her

Travelers, Those Soon to be Traveling, and Those Apart from Us

All those who are traveling, soon to be traveling, or apart from us

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

Joel O.—U.S. Navy; hospital corpsman ("medic")
 Joseph B.—a Terryville neighbor; U.S. Marine Corps
 Joshua P.—husband of a niece of Fr. John's; U.S. Army pilot
 Alexander—relative of Carolyn P.; 82nd Airborne Division soldier now home from abroad
 Derek—relative of Carolyn P.; serving in Afghanistan in the U.S. Army
 Ian H.—Fr. David K.'s son-in-law; preparing for overseas deployment, U.S. Army

Anniversaries of Marriage

NONE THIS WEEK

Birthdays

Rdr. John Paul Szepel

11/2

News and Notes

Bible Study Sessions Continue on Tuesday Evenings: We have been holding weekly Bible Study sessions, via video teleconference (“Zoom”) on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. This week, we will be concluding our examination of the First Letter to the Thessalonians.

Wednesday Morning Matins Services: Unless otherwise announced, we will be regularly serving Matins on Wednesday mornings in our Parish, beginning at 8:00 a.m. As at the Sunday morning Divine Liturgies, we require the use of masks and enforce social distancing. Please, consider joining us for Matins, if you are available on Wednesday mornings. The service lasts about 45 minutes.

Bible Study Companion Book: If you are interested in reading a book that will serve as a companion to the efforts we are presently making in Bible Study, this book may be a resource for you: *Words of Fire: The Early Epistles of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians and the Galatians*. This book is written by Fr. Lawrence Farley, who is a priest in British Columbia, Canada, in a parish of the Orthodox Church in America’s Archdiocese of Canada. It is published by Conciliar Press, Chesterton, Indiana (<https://store.ancientfaith.com/biblical-studies/>). Fr. Farley writes in his introduction to this book, “This commentary was written...for the average layman, for the nonprofessional....” Thus, it is a book that is accessible to us, Orthodox Christians who regularly attend Church, and who would like to know more about the Bible.

Annual Diocesan Assembly: The 2020 Diocesan Assembly is going to take place, via video teleconference, on Friday and Saturday, November 6 and 7. Our parish will be represented by Fr. John and Protodeacon Paul. John “Jack” Kriniske will, also, represent our parish. On October 14, at the monthly Parish Council meeting, Jack was officially elected to be our parish lay representative by our Parish Council.

A New Bishop for our Diocese: Fr. John, in his capacity as District Dean of the Connecticut Deanery, has been appointed to the Diocesan Committee that is now fulfilling the task of meeting with the men who have been identified as possible candidates to be the next presiding bishop here in the Diocese of New England. For more information about the process by which a new bishop will be nominated and elected, please, see Fr. John’s article on the subject, entitled “A New Bishop for Our Diocese—Some Question and Answers.” That article was recently published in our Diocesan newspaper, and is, also, available at this “clickable” link: <https://terryvilleorthodoxchurch.org/files/A-New-Bishop-For-The-Diocese.pdf>.

Support from the Parish: If you require financial support during this vexing and challenging time, contact Fr. John, personally and confidentially, and he will endeavor to help you get the assistance that you need. For 2020, the Diocese of New England has reduced by 16.7% (one-sixth) the annual Fair Share contributions that it usually expects from our Parish. This reduction has been put into place with the specific intention that this money—the money that the Parish will not be sending to the Diocese, but will be retaining locally—will be used for charitable and relief purposes. **Don’t be shy: If you need help, contact Fr. John. All such contacts will be treated with strict confidentiality and great sensitivity.**

Donations to the Parish: Please, continue to support our parish during this challenging time. Donations to the Parish may be submitted via checks made out to and mailed to Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church, 34 Fairview Avenue, Terryville, CT 06786-6329. Also, a PayPal Donation “button” (<https://www.terryvilleorthodoxchurch.org/donatenow>) 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%, plus \$0.30 per transaction. (So, for example, a donation of \$100.00 given via PayPal will realize us actual income of \$97.50.)

Readings from Holy Scripture

Scripture Readings for the 21st Sunday after Pentecost, this year November 1

The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Galatians (Galatians 2:16-20)

Brothers and Sisters: We know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 8:26-39)

At that time Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And as he stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes, and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me." For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert.) Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them leave. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with Jesus; but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city all that Jesus had done for him.

Scripture Readings for the 22nd Sunday after Pentecost, this year November 8

The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Galatians (Galatians 6:11-18)

Brothers and Sisters: See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 8:41-56)

At that time, there came to Jesus a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue; and falling at Jesus' feet he besought him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As Jesus went, the people pressed round him. And a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and could not be healed by any one, came up behind him, and touched the fringe of his garment; and immediately her flow of blood ceased. And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the multitudes surround you and press upon you!" But Jesus said, "Some one touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me." And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." While Jesus was speaking, a man from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well." And when Jesus came to the house, he permitted no one to enter with him, except Peter and James and John, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and bewailing her; but Jesus said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But taking her by the hand Jesus called, saying, "Child, arise." And her spirit returned, and she got up at once; and Jesus directed that something should be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.