

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 22, 2020

24th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 7. Afterfeast of the Entry Into the Temple. Apostles of the Seventy Philemon and Archippus, Martyr Apphia, wife of Philemon and Equal-to-the-Apostles, and Onesimus, disciple of St. Paul (1st c.). Martyrdom of St. Michael, Prince of Tver' (1318). Rt. Blv. Yaropolk, in Baptism Peter, Prince of Vladimir in Volyn' (1086). Virgin Martyr Cecilia and the Holy Martyrs Valerian, Tiburtius and Maximus at Rome (ca. 230). Martyr Procopius the Reader, at Caesarea in Palestine (303). Martyr Menignus at Parium (250). St. Agabbas of Syria (5th c.). Righteous Michael the Soldier, of Bulgaria (866). Ven. Callistus Xanthopoulos (Mt. Athos—1363).

<https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2020/11/22>

Confession Appointments, during the Nativity Fast (Advent)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Glory to Jesus Christ!

It is considered a normal part of our journeys through the fasting seasons of the Church that we would participate in the saving sacrament of Holy Confession. Obviously, this is a difficult and vexing time, as we continue to journey through what we might well call “COVID-time.” Nevertheless, I would ask that every parishioner, please, contact me to discuss the matter of participation in the sacraments of the Church. We need to determine what is possible in this regard for every member of the Parish. (Perhaps, we will only be able to meet virtually, in cyberspace, or by phone, but we must be in contact.) This is of vital and increasing importance, not in spite of the present public health crisis, but because of it.

We are all making efforts, even in this difficult time, to have our most important needs met. We are accessing our materials needs, such as for groceries and other items. Many of us are, also, accessing medical and dental care at this time. If we are meeting those important needs, we should, also, be making sure to meet our deepest need—the need for continuing connection to Jesus Christ and His Church. The things of this world will pass away, but the eternal things of God are everlasting, and the sacraments of the Church connect us to eternity.

Please, do be in touch with me. Also, please know that I will be reaching out to you.

With love, and hope, and prayers,

In Christ,

Fr. John H.

Happy Thanksgiving to all! May God bless us with gratitude and hope!

A Thanksgiving Prayer: O Lord Jesus Christ, our God and Savior, we give thanks for Your loving kindness and all the blessings that You have richly poured out upon us. We fall down in worship and adoration before You, the King of Glory. We praise You, we glorify You, we bless You, and we give thanks to You for Your great goodness and tender mercy. To You we come, our sweet Lord and loving Master: Shine in our hearts the light of Your grace. Enlighten our minds, that we may walk righteously throughout all the days of our life by keeping Your commandments; for glorified and exalted is Your holy name, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Patriarch IRINEJ of Serbia—head of the Serbian Orthodox Church | d. 11/20/2020 |
| His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS (<i>retired</i>) | d. 10/19/2020 |
| Madeline “Maddie” Bell—Terryville H.S. student, tragically killed | d. 11/13/2020 |
| Robert (Bob)—Patty N.’s brother | d. 10/21/2020 |

Anniversaries of Repose – Memory Eternal!

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Maxim Vavriniak | 11/22/1945 |
| Mary Wandzilak | 11/22/1960 |
| Joseph Kowaleski | 11/23/1987 |
| Philip Kowsher | 11/25/1949 |
| William Kablesh | 11/25/1984 |
| Vasily Senetcen | 11/26/1926 |
| Christine Homsevich | 11/26/1931 |
| Elena Homsevich | 11/26/1931 |
| Iosephat Dziamba | 11/26/1960 |
| Michael Duke | 11/27/1960 |
| Konstanty Kisiel | 11/27/2000 |
| Anna Delendik | 11/28/1929 |
| Panteleimon Dziamba | 11/28/1931 |

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
Archpriest John—Fr. John H.’s uncle through marriage; cancer
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
Dimitri—brother of Carolyn P.; health issues
child Hattie—injured in freak accident; request of a family in our parish
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
Maryellen—an acquaintance of Carolyn P.; resident in long-term care

New Mother and their New Babies

Nadia and the child Stella Airi born of her—Nadia is Rich and Laura K.’s daughter
(All continues to go well for this new baby and her parents. Praise be!)

Expectant Mothers

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, deployed abroad
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

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| George Wegh | 11/22 |
| Nicholas Tichon | 11/27 |

In Memory of Madeline “Maddie” Bell – a young person from Terryville

We have received this message (which we have lightly edited for clarity) from Terryville High School:

Terryville High School, through the Student Council, Future Business Leaders of America, National Honor Society, Pep Club, and Leo Club, is holding an event called “Stuff the Bus” where we are asking community members to donate non-perishable food and winter clothing. We are doing this on behalf of Madeline (Maddie) Bell, 15, who was murdered on Friday, November 12, 2020. Maddie was a sophomore at the high school. The school community wanted to do something in her honor so this is what we have chosen. A school bus is parked at the high school now until Tuesday, November 24, 4 p.m. Students and faculty will be at the school from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. every day until then – weekends included. But, if that is not convenient to drop off your items, you may leave them at the door of the bus and we will put them in the bus when we get there. Thank you so much for helping us honor Maddie and give back to a community that has lost so much.

The circumstances of Maddie's death are appallingly sad, and dreadfully tragic. Please, pray for her and for her family. Memory Eternal!

News and Notes

The Nativity Fast began this past Sunday, November 15: The Nativity Fast, sometimes called Advent, began on Sunday, November 15. This fast lasts for the 40 days until the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas) on December 25. This is a time of fasting and prayer in preparation for the Feast of Christmas. Right now, of course, we are living through a public health crisis, which impacts our ability to have as full an expression of parish life as we might prefer. However, this does not mean that we cannot or should not keep the Nativity Fast. We should, certainly, be doing everything that we can to mark and keep the fast, and to prepare ourselves, accordingly, for the celebration of Christmas, the Saving Birth of Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.

Wednesday Morning Matins Services, via “Zoom”: Due to the increase in cases of COVID-19 here in our area, we have made the choice to limit in-person activities at the Church. **This means that, for now, we are suspending our in-person Wednesday morning Matins services.** We have replaced that in-person service with an on-line gathering for worship and prayer. Watch your email inbox for details. (We had our first such online gathering this past Wednesday morning, and it was well-attended and well-received.)

Bible Study (This week back to our usual evening for gathering, which is Tuesday): We have been holding weekly Bible Study sessions, via video teleconference (“Zoom”) on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. We will be continuing our reading and discussion of the Letter to the Galatians.

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.

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.)

NOTES FROM FR. JOHN: Some Ideas for Keeping Advent

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Glory to Jesus Christ!

Advent, usually called “The Nativity Fast” in our Orthodox Christian tradition, is upon us. The Nativity Fast is the 40-day period of preparation before Christmas. **Here are some ideas for making Advent holy:**

Prayer: Many of us are not as steadfast in prayer as we ought to be. Let’s pray, consistently, every day. We can use The Parish Prayerbook. (<https://www.terryvilleorthodoxchurch.org/files/prayerbook.pdf>)

Scripture: Let’s read the Bible. We can read, every day, briefly, but consistently, from the Psalms and the Gospels. Right now, the opening chapters of Saint Luke’s and Saint Matthew’s Gospels are recommended, as those two Gospels contain the Scriptural accounts of our Lord’s birth.

Study: Let’s learn our Faith. Two books to read during Advent, both available from SVS Press (www.svspress.com), are: *The Message of the Bible*, by George Cronk, and *The Faith We Hold*, by the late Archbishop Paul of Finland. (I first read *The Faith We Hold* as a boy. This slim, simple book is a small treasure.)

Silence: Let’s turn off the TV, shut down the laptop, shut off the iPhone and iPad, and turn off the radio in the house or car. Let’s embrace silence. Sometimes, we complain that we don’t sense the presence of God in our lives. Are we listening for His voice?

Give up one bad habit: What is a bad habit I have? Lord, help me name that sin and eradicate it, permanently—just one bad habit, because I am too weak to slay all my bad habits. Let’s all pick one vice and eliminate it. By the grace of God, virtue will fill the space that is created within us. Giving up bad habits is a significant and important part of fasting.

Discipline: Discipline is another word for fasting, and we are, most certainly, called to fast during Advent. Fasting is hard work, in part because the world around does not practice fasting. Let’s discipline ourselves by keeping the fast. Our fasting will lead us to focus on Christ, the One Who gives Christmas its name!

With love in Christ, *Fr. John H.*

Readings from Holy Scripture

Scripture Readings for the 24th Sunday after Pentecost, this year November 22

The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Ephesians (Eph. 2:14-22)

Brothers and Sisters: Christ Jesus is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 12:16-21)

The Lord spoke this parable, "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said this, Jesus called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

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