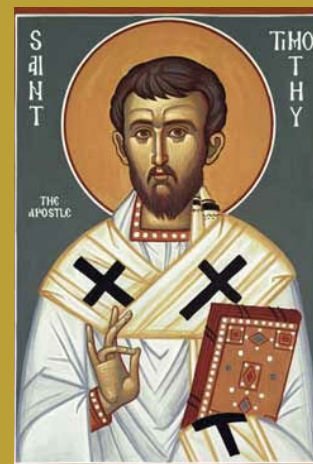


Road to Emmaus

Walking with Christ



ST. TIMOTHY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH, A
PARISH OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
DIOCESES OF NORTH AMERICA

Priestly Principals with Fr. John Christianson

December 3, 2021

The Holy Prophet Zephaniah, Saint John the Silent [the Hesychast]

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen

Christ is in our midst...He is and ever shall be!

This last week on Tuesday evening I met with a group of students at the UC Davis campus; this is the OCF ministry (Orthodox Christian Fellowship). Each month, twice a month, three of us priests, Fr Ian McKinnon, Fr Timothy Wineger (both from Holy Cross Church in Sacramento), and I, rotate in and lead the group of students in the Compline evening prayer, then make and feed them supper, followed by a discussion and spiritual interaction. For us old guys, (Fr Ian and myself) it's an awesome time to feel the pulse of our youth, hearing about campus life, their studies, their dreams and future aspirations, their struggles, and the like. I'm proud of these kids, taking time out of their busy schedules and studies to meet together as the Body of Christ on Campus and spiritually reflect and draw closer to God at these twice a month OCF gatherings.

Not all of these kids are Orthodox believers, not all the kids are believers at all, but the fact that they show up (if for nothing else, they are getting a free home cooked meal) and are willing pray together, and share something of their lives in a group setting, says a lot. For those kids who are willing to share out loud, it's refreshing hearing their stories about the Faith, or their lack of Faith. God is there, at the supper table, in the moment and is very present with us through the abiding of the Ever Present Holy Spirit. The Scriptures remind us, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18: 20). It's true, for even though we can't see it through our physical eyes, the spiritual dimension is a reality, it's powerful, and changes lives.

Through a couple of "old timers" and a "young-energized-fresh-out-of-seminary priest", the Holy Spirit works His way through the oftentimes nervousness and hesitation of the students, and sets the tone of the fellowship on things Above.

Beloved in Christ, it's the same with us when we gather together in God's house and celebrate together in the Breaking of the Bread. Even in our homes, The Little Church, God joins us in our everyday routines and actions around the home. How do we encourage and enliven this unseen, but very real interaction with our Heavenly Father? Well, I may sound like a broken record with only one speed, with the same tune over and over again, (but none-the-less, it's true), begin your day with faithful prayer and thanksgiving to God.

Ask Him to be your companion and guide throughout the day, beseeching your guardian Angel for safe keeping as well. God richly provides for us, therefore pray before your meals, and when you receive your pay check, give Him thanksgiving as well, in unforeseen events and happenings throughout the day, good or bad, echo the words of Saint John Chrysostom, "Glory to God for all things", and before retiring to bed find a good read and calm your mind and still your heart with reflections from The Good Book.

As we approach the Nativity of our Savior Jesus Christ, adorn your home with an Icon of the Feast and be reminded as you see all the Christmas lights lit-up on the eves of houses in your neighborhood, that it is God Himself Incarnate, as a New Born Babe Who comes to us this Season, for He truly is the Light of the World.

I love you all, God be Praised,

Father John



Icon Spotlight - Ignatius the God-Bearer, Bishop of Antioch

By tradition, on the day the Lord was teaching: 'Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven' (Matt 18:4) our Lord took Ignatius and placed him among the disciples. Saint Ignatius was later a disciple of St. John the Theologian, along with Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna.

Later as Bishop in Antioch Ignatius introduced antiphonal singing into the Church, which was revealed to him from among the angels in heaven. After refusing to offer sacrifice to the idols Saint Ignatius was thrown to the lions in Rome, reposing in the year 106.



LIVING EUCHARISTICALLY

We have been told since we were children to "Count your blessings", yet how many of us actually do? In this season of Thanksgiving, we are all called to collectively pause and give thought of what, in fact, we are thankful for: health, love, relationships, faith, parish, and the list is very long once we begin to ponder. These days our lives are moving at warp speed and we often find ourselves on the proverbial treadmill, running in autopilot, and not being in the right headspace to truly acknowledge the wealth of blessings that have been bestowed upon us from on high. This rapid pace of life and not stopping to smell the roses, puts spiritual blinders on us all and we fail to be grateful or thankful to what it is we do have, as opposed to bewailing what we perceive as what we don't have; we are not living **Eucharistically**.

What do you mean... to live Eucharistically? Isn't that in reference to the Holy Eucharist during Diviner Liturgy? Yes, that is where we are most aware and familiar of the word, but how is that connected to the rest of my life? You see, the practice of "giving thanks" has been closely connected with our remembrance of Christ's death and resurrection from the very beginning:

*"And he took bread, and **gave thanks**, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.' Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.' (Luke 22:19-20)*

The term Eucharist (to give Thanks) is derived from the Greek word "Eucharisteo" (εὐχαριστέω). That is why the Church calls Holy Communion the "Eucharist". It is a time of **thanksgiving**, when we lift up our sacrifice of praise to God. We thank Him for the gift of salvation and for every gift "manifest and unseen".

Archmandrite Vasileios, in his book "Hymn of Entry" states "We can find nothing of our own to give Him... that is why we take everything that is His own and offer it with **gratitude**... this total liturgical offering given in return to the Lord who is eternally slaughtered-an act of thanksgiving and freedom-forms the center of the mystery... This offering strips us of everything: we are lost (Matt. 16:25). We cease to exist. We die. At the same time, this is the moment we are born into life..."

Our response to His infinite Love for us personally, is to live a life of real Thanksgiving and gratitude---to live Eucharistically! Realizing our dependence on His mercy and our freedom that we have the ability to have communion, a real relationship, with our Lord and God, we must take this reality of the Holy Eucharist, and live the totality of our lives in a perpetual state of Thanksgiving and gratitude. And with this inner spiritual orientation, we will be able to receive our New-Born King in the coming great feast of the Nativity with much joy and profound transformation!

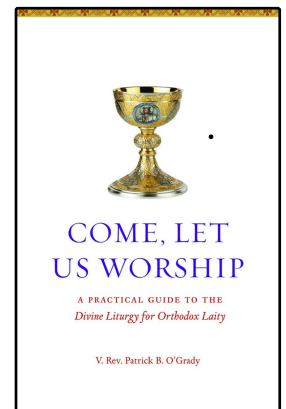
Wishing you all a Blessed Advent!

V. Rev. Dr. Spyridon Jajeh

Bookstore Happenings

Book Recommendation - Come, Let Us Worship

Walks the reader through the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, in detail including the meaning of each element and how as a parishoner to best participate in the services. Recommended for those newer to Orthodoxy, those who wonder about the meaning of Liturgy. Additionally, a really helpful resource I used to prepare my non-Orthodox family on what to expect in Divine Liturgy.



Nativity Icons * 2022 Calendars * Fasting Cookbook * bookstore@sttimothy.us

Book Review

Hymn of Entry by Archimandrite Vasileios

I could not recommend the book "Hymn of Entry" by one of the greatest spiritual writers of our age, Archimandrite Vasileios of Stavronikita, any more loudly as truly essential reading for any Christian truly looking to drink from the wellspring of our faith; the faith of the Holy Fathers. The Archimandrite is able to distill the most profoundness of theology in a manner that resonates in the heart of hearts, ours. He is able to relay the truth of our theology, which is liturgical by nature, in a manner that is accessible and reorients the reader to a time when man was able to converse with the LORD, as once did Moses. He is speaking from a lifetime of experience and not from a purely scholastic or academic paradigm, and this experience "in the Lord" is that same experience that the disciples had on Mt. Tabor, experiencing the Transfiguration of our Lord and Saviour, and by experiencing this uncreated energy of God (grace), once becomes transformed in the process.

This theology, living through the liturgical life of the Church, of which the Archimandrite so eloquently elucidates, is the very theology of the Holy Fathers such as: St. Maximus the Confessor, St. Dionysius the Areopagite, and St. John the Theologian; he faithfully delivers to us the True Theology that is transformative. The foundation of his theology is liturgical, not a system of philosophy or pop psychology, but the very expression of the Church's mystical and interior life. When asked "what is theology", he affirms "true theology is always living, a form of holy action, something that changes our life and "assumes" us into itself; we are to become theology". And the reality of our faith tells us that theology is not reserved for the few and privileged, but in fact, each is called to become a "theologian soul".

This is not a long book to read, but is instantly captivating. It is so deep of Wisdom, I often found myself using it as a source of meditation; as a digest a chapter, I find myself putting it down and ruminating on the text, trying to incorporate its reality into my thinking and breathing. The book will give you a fresh perspective into the Holy Sacraments, the Liturgical life of the Church, and the spiritual transformation that ensues. The book is much needed spiritual reading, in an era that has been increasingly stripped of proper language in which to engage God. For those spiritual seekers truly looking to be fed by the richness of our faith and the Power of the resurrection, please stop by the Bookstore and pick up a copy---you will not be disappointed.

Yours in Christ,

V. Rev. Dr. Spyridon Jajeh

HYMN OF ENTRY



Archimandrite Vasileios

Confessions of an Orthodox Convert

Speaking very candidly as a newer convert to Orthodoxy from the Protestant world, there is just so much to learn and know about everything! as an Orthodox Christian.

Some of what I am about to share may be known to you all who are cradle-orthodox or converted many years ago. However I hope that as I am humbly sharing my ignorance and struggles, I can at least put a smile on your face.

As a convert I was fully aware that to properly begin the new week I should attend Vespers on Saturday evening, which I have truthfully been inconsistent. But beyond that I was missing the importance of this Vespers service, which is to start and maintain a holy silence in my heart until Divine Liturgy Sunday morning. This includes deferring all other obligations in my life until after the Eucharist. Being a busy wife, mother and daughter I am striving to put my life in order so I can prioritize the remembrance of God as we begin the new liturgical week and know that His merciful grace will guide me towards what is pleasing to Him.

With Joy and Blessings,

January

Community Corner



First Day of Sunday School 11-16-2021



**Thanksgiving Feast
11-20-2021**



Entrance of the Theotokos 11-21-2021

Sisterhood

Keep a Merry Heart!

Keeping a merry heart is not always easy. We are bombarded with visual and auditory "noise" all day, every day...every single day. Sound-bites and headlines assault our senses with so much negativity, heartbreak and loudness. I liken it to having to endure the cacophony of an arcade with strobe lights and loud, blaring and discordant music. It's crazy-making, and fills one with anger and fear without knowing that its affect is within us.

But, there are ways to keep a merry heart...

"Be still and know that I am God"

Being silent and taking moment throughout the day to look for the small, daily miracles that God has given to us. Slow down, breathe in the sweet air, look at the pretty fall leaves and how they look against the crystal-clear blue sky, listen to the geese as they honk on their way to the wintering grounds. So many beautiful things in our world that can shut out the cacophony. Tune out the noise and just be. In the stillness we will find our merry hearts.

I am so grateful to all of the wonderful women in our Sisterhood for this past year. Thank you for your constant support and encouragement, not only to me, but for each other. I am heartened to watch everyone bloom and feel that they have a place in the garden we have planted.

I wish you a Holy and Blessed Nativity and a very, very Happy Christmas!

Johanna



**Parish St. Nicholas Day Celebration
12-5-2021**

Want to know more about Orthodoxy, the True Church of Christ, or get involved with the parish?

- Join us for Sunday Worship, Divine Liturgy @ 9:15am
- Spiritual Talks and Catachumen classes with Fr John, Thursdays @ 6:30pm
- Vespers, Wednesdays @ 6:00pm
- Join our mailing list, www.sttimothy.us/contact
- Email via website, www.sttimothy.us/contact
- Email directly, info@sttimothy.us
- Call or Text Fr John Christianson, 831.566.8861
- Join us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/St.TimothyAOC.FairfieldCA
- Join us on Instagram, www.instagram.com/sttimothysff/