



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 45 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

Volume 33

2019

Number 41

Sunday	Oct 13	<i>17th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 8 / Frs of the 7th Ecumenical Council</i>		
		9:00 am	Church School	
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy	Coffee Hour
Saturday	Oct 19	<i>Holy Prophet Joel</i>		
		5:30 pm	Great Vespers	Confession
Sunday	Oct 20	<i>18th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 1 / Frs of the 7th Ecumenical Council</i>		
		Readings:	2 Cor 9:6-11	Lk 16:19-31
		9:00 am	Church School	
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy	Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Oct 6

Attendance: (Adults 106, Children 34)	140
Operating	\$3,988.00
OCA Assessments	69.00
Uganda Children	60.00
Charities	52.00
Icons	30.00
Seminarians	314.00
Maintenance	59.00

TURKEY DINNER PROJECT

After six years of good and faithful service, the Gordons are stepping down from the Thanksgiving Turkey Dinner Project. We are seeking another team to carry on this wonderful ministry. Jim & Lisa have agreed to act as consultants to get the next team up and running. Please see Mark Joslin if you can serve. Thanks to Jim & Lisa for their dedicated stewardship.

DONATING INDOOR FLOWERS

As part of our new Indoor Flower Ministry, we're requesting sponsors. This could be in honor of Anniversaries, Birthdays, in memory of a loved one, etc. This would be noted on that day during announcements. Table Flower donations will be \$20.00. Sign up on the Flower Donations Calendar in the Foyer.

ST INNOCENT'S ORPHANAGE

On Sunday, Oct 20, Anna Cunningham will offer a brief Presentation on St Innocent's after Liturgy. During her talk, a basket will be passed to benefit the Orphanage.

4th ANNUAL MEL TINTOR MEMORIAL BLOOD DRIVE

Saturday, Oct 26, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. To make an appointment online:

1. Go to www.redcrossblood.org
2. Put in 44060 and click "find a drive"
3. Click the "load more results" button at the bottom of the address list until the 26th of October shows up (took about 5 clicks). We will also need helpers and baked goods for that day. Please let the Abernathy's know if you can help out.

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Perry (Capitan), Sbdcn Leonard, John (Adam's nephew), Ted Geletka, Nina Stehnach (Fr's frnds), Julian, John Clements, Sarah Crivella, Nancy, (Ruth B's frnd), Joe (Dzura frnds), David McNaughton (Holly K's dad), Andy Dzura, Bruno Christani (now at home), Mark & Lauren (Butterfield famly) suffering Christians in the Middle East.

Anniversaries: Joe & Ashly Dimatia (10/13).

Birthdays: Emily Medakovich (10/14), Kaitlin Murphy, Mario Christani, Cole Schlafer (10/17), Merrick Wagner (10/19).

Expecting: Mitch & Winnie, James & Lisa, Joe & Ashley, Vitaly & Luba.

Memory Eternal: Stanley (9/16) Chad's nephew.

It's All About You

by Dcn George Shumaik

In American parlance, a popular phrase has made its way into debate intent on dealing a fatal blow to an opponent's position – “You think it's all about you!” The implication is clear – you are self-centered and not considerate of my point of view.

The intended result of exposing this flaw in character is to put an end to further discussion. It is a harsh accusation, particularly when a balanced view of human nature suggests self-interest is a primal characteristic. From a biological perspective all living organisms spend much of their lives trying to preserve their own or their species existence. Quest for food, shelter, protection from enemies and reproduction can be a full-time endeavor.

For humans privileged to live in the economic “first world” of Western civilization, the needs of self-preservation have over-all been satisfied. In that comfort we have turned our attention to the indulgences of self-gratification.

While pre-occupation with the self is a hallmark of American culture, there is also evidence of charity, compassion and concern for the “third world”.

Secular humanism, while having little use for the idea of God, does promote care for one another, other creatures and the environment. For some there is profound confidence that Homo Sapiens, being the highest expression of an otherwise undirected evolutionary process, will somehow figure out how to reach a futuristic utopia. The other more pessimistic view is that we, like most species, are on the pathway to extinction which in our case will be suicidal in nature. In either scenario, death of the individual remains the outcome with any existence beyond the grave reduced to romantic fantasy.

Christianity, particularly the Orthodox East, has followed a more optimistic pathway for centuries. Historian, author and Orthodox priest, Father John Strickland posits in a series of podcasts on Ancient Faith Radio and in his recent book, *The Age of Paradise*, that Western civilization has slowly traded away the paradise of God for an ill-defined nihilistic human utopia. He examines in exquisite detail how the earliest Christians formed a culture rooted first and foremost in gathering for worship, thanksgiving and remembrance of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

That culture which suffered oppression for three centuries ultimately became the cornerstone of a civilization that Fr John calls “Christendom” that lasted for a millennium and still lives within the Orthodox Church. Regardless of the turmoil of the times within Church history, the basic tenets of the Faith have been preserved and practiced. God the Father creates the cosmos and all life contained therein through a divine act of love.

Human beings are created in the image of that loving God. We have fallen away from the love of God in

pursuit of our own desires. We all eat of the “forbidden fruit” with Satan there to urge us on. We have abandoned the paradise of Eden for an ethereal utopia of our own invention. We are burdened by sin but have a pathway to salvation through the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Glorification of Jesus, the Christ.

Moreover, in Orthodoxy, the Kingdom of God is not relegated to merely a distant hope but is present now to be experienced in the sacramental life of His Holy Church - a foretaste of that which is to come for those who believe.

In relationship to the self, Jesus' teaching is not ambiguous. “Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me’” (Matt 16:24) He begins his earthly ministry by calling us to turn away from sin. “From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” (Matt 4:17) Our relationship to others is foundational to the Faith. “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you... Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful” (Luke 6) Then we have the entire 25th Chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel – the parable of the wise and foolish virgins – the parable of the talents and finally the last Judgement. The actions are clear – feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, love your enemies – have concern for and mercy on your fellow man. Then comes the sobering admonition of Saint Paul: “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.” (1Cor:13-3) Salvation just as life itself is a gift from God that cannot be earned by the cataloguing of good works. For Orthodox Christians there is no dichotomy between faith and works – they proceed one from the other forged out of love. It is a dogma of the Orthodox Faith that Christ came to bring salvation to all mankind – we hear this proclaimed frequently in the Divine Services. It may even seem that the Grace of God and Divine Judgement is distributed predicated upon the group to which we belong – the Jews, the Gentiles, the Christians – Orthodox or heterodox. In fact, as proclaimed in the Divine Liturgy of St Basil, God “knows the name and age of each, even from his mother's womb.” God knows who you are, is concerned about your salvation and promises that you will stand alone before Christ at your death. Let us therefore be confident as we struggle to deny ourselves in humility and service to our brethren that from God's viewpoint “it is all about you!” Amen