

## ***Parish Prayer List (Living)***

Metropolitan Nicholas	Sharon	Bob	Reader Mark
Andrea	Amanda	Sherry	Joretta
Fr. Michael	Barry	Sean	Kristi
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Andrea & Kirby
Nanette	Michael	Tatiana	Rachael
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Bob Wedder
Anna	Erin and baby	Alexandra	

## ***Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)***

Francis Dreyer (+2/1)  
John Beach (+2/27)

Ia (Edith) Glogg (+2/17)  
Veronica Brickman (+3/5)

## **Thoughts from the Fathers**

Love does not depend on time, and the power of love continues always. There are some who believe that the Lord suffered death for love of man but because they do not attain to this love in their own souls it seems to them that it is an old story of bygone days. But when the soul knows the love of God by the Holy Spirit she feels without a shadow of doubt that the Lord is our Father, the closest, the best and dearest of fathers, and there is no greater happiness than to love God with all our hearts, with all our souls and with all our minds, according to the Lord's commandment, and our neighbor as ourself. And when this love is in the soul, everything rejoices her; but when it is lost a man cannot find peace, and is troubled, and blames others as if they had done him an injury, and does not realize that he himself is at fault – he has lost his love for God and has accused or conceived a hatred for his brother.

Grace proceeds from brotherly love, and by brotherly love grace is preserved; but if we do not love our brother the grace of God will not come into our souls.

*St. Silouan the Athonite*

“Anytime there are temptations and troubles, there are also laurels of victory,” the pious Elder Gregorios would say to Hieromonk Ioakim Spetsieris, and then he would add: “If it were possible to find a monastery filled with angels, and they

placed you as one of the brothers in it, still you would not be saved, because no one would bother you, and you would be living an easy life and this saying would be suitable to your situation, 'In your lifetime you received your good things.'" (Luke 16:20-25)

*from An Athonite Gerontikon*

+++++

***St. Clement of Alexander on the Prodigal Son***

1. What choral dance and high festival is held in heaven, if there is one that has become an exile and a fugitive from the life led under the Father, knowing not that those who put themselves far from Him shall perish; if he has squandered the gift, and substance, and inheritance of the Father; if there is one whose faith has failed, and whose hope is spent, by rushing along with the Gentiles into the same profligacy of debauchery; and then, famished and destitute, and not even filled with what the swine eat, has arisen and come to his Father!

But the kind Father waits not till the son comes to Him. For perchance he would never be able or venture to approach, did he not find Him gracious. Wherefore, when he merely wishing, when he straight away made a beginning, when he took the first step, while he was yet a great way off, He [the Father] was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck and kissed him. And then the son, taking courage, confessed what he had done.

Wherefore the Father bestows on him the glory and honour that was due and meet, putting on him the best robe, the robe of immortality; and a ring, a royal signet and divine seal -- impress of consecration, signature of glory, pledge of testimony (for it is said, 'He hath set to his seal that God is true' [[John 3.33](#)]) and shoes, not those perishable ones which he hath set his foot on holy ground is bidden take off ([Ex. 3.5](#)), nor such as he who is sent to preach the kingdom of heaven is forbidden to put on ([Mt. 10.10](#)), but such as wear not, and are suited for the journey to heaven, becoming and adorning the heavenly path, such as unwashed feet never put on, but those which are washed by our Teacher and Lord ([John 13.8](#)).

Many, truly, are the shoes of the sinful soul, by which it is bound and cramped. For each man is cramped by the cords of his own sins. Accordingly, Abraham swears to the king of Sodom, 'I will not take of all that is thine, from a thread to a shoe-latchet' ([Gen. 14.23](#)). On account of these being defiled and polluted on the earth, every kind of wrong and selfishness engrosses life. As the Lord reproves Israel by Amos, saying, 'For three iniquities of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn him back; because they have given away the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, which tread upon the dust of the ground' ([Amos 2.6](#)).

2. Now the shoes which the Father bids the servant give to the repentant son who has betaken himself to Him, do not impede or drag to the earth (for the earthly tabernacle weighs down the anxious mind); but they are buoyant, and ascending, and waft to heaven, and serve as such a ladder and chariot as he requires who has turned his mind towards the Father. For, beautiful after being first beautifully adorned with all these things without, he enters into the gladness within. For 'Bring out' was said by Him who had first said, 'While he was yet a great way off, he ran and fell upon his neck'. For it is here<sup>1</sup> that all the preparation for entrance to the marriage to which we are invited must be accomplished. He, then, who has been made ready to enter will say, 'This my joy is fulfilled' ([John 3.29](#)). But the unlovely and unsightly man will hear, 'Friend, how camest thou in here, without having a wedding garment?' ([Mt. 22.12](#)). And the fat and unctuous food, -- the delicacies abundant and sufficing of the blessed -- the fatted calf is killed; which is also again spoken of as a lamb (not literally); that no one may suppose it small; but it is the great and greatest. For not small is 'the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world' ([John 1.29](#)), who 'was led as a sheep to the slaughter', the sacrifice full of marrow, all whose fat, according to the sacred law, was the Lord's. For He was wholly devoted and consecrated to the Lord; so well grown, and to such excessive size, as to reach and extend over all, and to fill those who eat Him and feed upon Him. For He is both flesh and bread, and has given Himself as both to us to be eaten.

To the sons, then, who come to Him, the Father gives the calf, and it is slain and eaten. But those who do not come to Him He pursues and disinherits, and is found to be a most powerful bull. Here, by reason of His size and prowess, it is said of Him, 'His glory is as that of an unicorn' ([Numbers 23.22](#)). And the prophet Habakkuk sees Him

bearing horns, and celebrates His defensive attitude -- 'horns in His hands' ([Habakkuk 3.4](#)). Wherefore the sign shows His power and authority, -- horns that pierce on both sides, or rather, on all sides, and through everything. And those who eat are so strengthened, and retain such strength from the life-giving food in them, that they themselves are stronger than their enemies, and are all but armed with the horns of a bull; as it is said, 'In thee shall we butt our enemies' ([Ps. 43.5](#)).

**3.** Gladness there is, and music, and dances; although the elder son, who had ever been with and ever obedient to the Father, takes it ill, when he who never had himself been dissipated or profligate sees the guilty one made happy.

Accordingly the Father calls him, saying, 'Son, thou art ever with me'. And what greater joy and feast and festivity can be than being continually with God, standing by His side and serving Him? 'And all that is mine is thine'. And blessed is the heir of God, for whom the Father holds possession -- the faithful, to whom the whole world of possessions belongs.

'It was meet that we should be glad, and rejoice; for thy brother was dead, and is alive again.' Kind Father, who givest all things life, and raisest the dead. 'And was lost, and is found.' And 'blessed is the man whom Thou hast chosen and accepted' ([Ps. 64.5](#)), and whom having sought, Thou dost find. 'Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered' ([Ps. 31.1](#)). It is for man to repent of sins; but let this be accompanied with a change that will not be checked. For he who does not act so shall be put to shame, because he has acted not with his whole heart, but in haste.

And it is ours to flee to God. And let us endeavour after this ceaselessly and energetically. For He says, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' ([Mt. 11.28](#)). And prayer and confession with humility are voluntary acts. Wherefore it is enjoined, 'First tell thy sins, that thou mayest be justified' ([Is. 43.26](#)). What afterwards we shall obtain, and what we shall be, it is not for us to judge.