

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

Alexandra	Rachael	Jessilyn	Reader Mark
Andrea	Amanda	Sherry	Thekla
Fr. Michael	Barry	Sean	Susan Mary
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Andrea & Kirby
Lawrence	Emil	Seraphim	Evdokia
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Bob Wedder
Anna	Brian	Carolyn	Monk Nicholas
Ashley & Ben	Kathy Tanner	Anthony	Pauline
Olga	Marina	Salvatore	Josephine
Nicholas (Nadja's brother)	Nina	Alma	Jason
Tatiana	Clint	Nadja	

All those who suffered  
in Friday's tornados

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

John Beach (+2/27)	Angelina Visconti (+2/14)
Pauline LoGalbo (+2/22)	Lorraine Solinko (+2/27)
Metropolitan Nicholas (+3/13)	Laura Crikis (+3/17)

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## **The Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian (for daily prayer in Lent)**

O Lord and Master of my life, take from the spirit of sloth,  
faint heartedness, lust of power and idle talk, but rather give to  
your servant the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love.  
Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions  
and not to judge my brother, for blessed are you for ages of  
ages. Amen.

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## **Words from the Fathers**

You see, God gave us these holy days so that by diligence in  
abstinence, in the spirit of humility and repentance, a man may  
be cleansed of the sins of the whole year and the soul relieved  
of its burden. Purified he goes forward to the holy day of the  
resurrection, and being made a new man through the change of  
heart induced by the fast, he can take his part in the Holy  
Mysteries and remain in spiritual joy and happiness, feasting  
with God the whole fifty days. Paschal time, as has been said,  
is the resurrection of the soul and the sign of this is that we do  
not kneel in church during the whole season up to Pentecost.  
*Saint Dorotheos of Gaza, "On the Holy Lenten Fast"*

Contrary to what many think or feel, a period of spiritual endeavor – during Lent, perhaps, or while taking part in a retreat – is a time of joy because it is a time for coming home, a period when we can come back to life. It should be a time when we shake off all that is worn and dead in us in order to become able to live, and to live with all the vastness, all the depth and all the intensity to which we are called. Unless we understand this quality of joy, we shall make of it a monstrous, blasphemous caricature, when in God's very name we make our life a misery for ourselves and for those who must pay the cost for our abortive attempts at holiness. This notion of joy couple with strenuous effort, with ascetical endeavor, with struggle indeed, may seem strange, and yet it runs through the whole of our spiritual life, the life of the Church and the life of the Gospel, because the Kingdom of God is to be conquered. It is not something which is simply given to those who leisurely, lazily wait for it to come.

*Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, +2003*

Many in the church are afraid to lead a better life, but not afraid to continue in the quagmire of their inertia. Because they consider themselves to be sinners, they tremble to approach the way of sanctity, but they are not afraid to persist in their vices.

*St. Gregory Dialogos (the Great), Pope of Rome 590-604*

By means of Great Lent we cleanse ourselves of the filth of sin, and at Holy Pascha we experience the blessedness of Christ's Kingdom that is to come. In climbing a high mountain, one tries to eliminate all unnecessary weight. The less a person carries, the easier it is for him to climb and the higher he is able to climb. So, too, in order to ascend spiritually, it is necessary first of all to free oneself from the weight of sin. It is taken from us through repentance, provided that we banish from ourselves all enmity and forgive each person whom we consider to be a fault before us. Once cleansed and forgiven by God, we then greet the Bright Resurrection of Christ.

*Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco*

With the word ‘fasting’ we mean abstinence from food, but also from all evil desires, so that the Christian may communicate his prayers to God with peace and fervor, kill his evil desires and acquire the Grace of God. The fast is a work of virtue for it bridles the desires of the flesh, strengthens the will, assists in repentance, and thus is a means of salvation.

*Elder Cleopa of Romania*

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## **Sunday of Orthodoxy**

To the Reverend Priests, the Deacons in Christ, the monastics, and all the pious and Christ-loving Orthodox faithful:

*“In the icons, we see the sufferings of our Master for us: the Cross, the Grave, Hades slain and pillaged; we see the contests of the Martyrs, the crowns, that very salvation which our first Prize-winner and Contest-master and Crown-bearer wrought in the midst of the earth. This festival we celebrate today and together we rejoice and are made glad with prayers and processions, and we cry out with psalms and hymns: Who is so great a god as our God? You are the God who performs wonders.”*

— The Synodikon for the Sunday of Orthodoxy

Beloved Faithful, Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,  
Today on this magnificent feast of the triumph of our Holy Orthodox Faith, we behold the icon of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Icon of the invisible God (Col. 1:15). Though no man has seen God at any time, the Only-Begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him (Jn. 1:18). And in the living icons of our Lord Jesus Christ -- the Saints, Martyrs and Confessors of the Orthodox Faith, we behold those who, by their holy lives and oftentimes by their martyric deaths have exalted the truth of the Gospel for all the world to see. We, who are their spiritual descendants and heirs, are bound to

confess their heroic and saintly deeds, which bear witness to the greatness of God and the power of faith.

The Sunday of Orthodoxy is most auspiciously placed at the beginning of the Great Lent as an encouragement for all of us to proclaim, and most importantly act, according to the ‘right belief’ of our Faith. We give honor to the memory of the Righteous by our authentic engagement in the spiritual disciplines of fasting, praying, and almsgiving. Through the help of our All-Merciful and Loving God, our sacrifices and spiritual efforts can bear fruit in our lives and in the lives of our families, church communities and society. What is more, these days of grace, repentance and transformation prepare us to become partakers of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ at Holy Pascha.

As the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America, we exhort all the faithful to celebrate this Feast with special joy, and with a shared sense of our common Faith. The Assembly includes every canonical Orthodox presence in our region, and as such is a living icon of the varied traditions that have been carried to the New World by faithful Orthodox Christians from around the world. We encourage mutual celebrations and fellowship in the spirit of the Feast. Let us honor those who have come before us and preserved for us the integrity of Holy Orthodoxy. Let us be ourselves icons of the Living God, filled with faith, hope and love, and thus fulfill our Lenten struggle, and be counted worthy to worship the Holy Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. With paternal love in Christ,

*The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America*