

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

*(Parish)*

Evangelos	Carolyn	Robert	Sharon
John	Maria	Anamay	Ron
Lawrence	Dianna	Efthalia	Denny
Anthony	Pauline	Nadja	Jerry
Beverly	David	Michael	Anastasia
Nina	Walter	Nathan	Mary
Joseph	Duncan	Thecla	Michael
Reader Mark	Jason	Silouan	Susan Mary
Maximus	Emily	Clint	George
Magdalini	Connie	Emil	John H.
Barbara	Yevgeniya	Roman	Ilija
Olga	Marina	John	James S.
Maria	Sophia	Danny	

*(non-Parish)*

Alexandra	Rachael	Jessilyn	Amanda
Christopher	Fr. Michael	Paige and Paul	Sean
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Meg
Barry Pierce	Rick P.	Susan K	Michael C.
Anna	Brian	Kathy Tanner	Salvatore
Travis	Billy Ray	Alma	Charles Kahn
Peter	Maria	Michael	Timothy
Petrese	Mary	Astilee	Dan Brown
Tony	Donna	Joe and Jessie	Sherry
Pani Susan	Emily M.	Kansas	Clyde
Rosco		Kilpatrick	

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

Olga Specian (+2/19)

Lorraine Solinko (+2/27)

Laura Crikis (+3/17)

Pauline LoGalbo (+2/22)

Metropolitan Nicholas (+3/13)

Michael Baker (+3/26)

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## **Thoughts from the Fathers**

Why do we honor the Cross with such reverence that we make mention of its power in our prayers after asking for the intercession of the Mother of God and the Heavenly Powers, before asking for that of the Saints, and sometimes even before asking for that of the Heavenly Powers? Because after the Saviour's sufferings, the Cross became the sign of the Son of Man, that is, the Cross signifies the Lord Himself, incarnate and suffering for our salvation.

*Saint John of Kronstadt, My Life in Christ*

O Lord, Thou hast stretched out Thine hands of thine own will upon the Cross: fill us with Thy light through fasting and through prayer, through abstinence and works of charity; and count us worthy to adore Thy Cross with contrite hearts, for Thou art good and Thou lovest mankind.

*From Joseph the Hymnographer*

The opinions of the scholars may be marvelously clever and yet they may be wrong. Whereas, the words of the saints are often very simple but they are always right.

*Saint Nikolai of Zicha (Velimirovic)*

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## **St. Ephraim the Syrian on the Holy Cross**

"The Cross abolished idolatrous adulation, enlightened the whole universe, gathered all the nations into one Church and united them with love. The Cross is the resurrection of the dead. The Cross is the hope of Christians. The Cross is the staff for the lame. The Cross is comfort for the poor. The Cross is the deposing of the proud. The Cross is the hope of those who despair. The Cross is food for the sailors. The Cross is haven for the bestormed. The Cross is the father for orphans. The Cross is comfort for those who mourn. The Cross is the protector of children. The Cross is the glory of men. The Cross is the crown of elders. The Cross is light for those sitting in darkness. The Cross is freedom for slaves, wisdom for the ignorant. The Cross is the preaching of prophets, the fellow-traveler of apostles. The Cross is the chastity of maidens, the joy of priests. The Cross is the foundation of the Church, the establishment of the universe. The Cross is the destruction of idolatrous temples, temptation for Jews. The Cross is the cleansing of the lepers, the rehabilitation of the enfeebled. The Cross is bread for the hungry, a fountain for the thirsty. The Cross is the good hope of monks, clothing for the naked.

By this holy armor of the Cross Christ the Lord has terminated the omniconsuming bowels of Hades and blocked the many snares in the mouth of the devil. Having seen the Cross, death trembled and released everyone whom she possessed with the first creature. Armed with the Cross, the God-bearing apostles subdued all the power of the enemy and caught all peoples in their dragnets, and gathered them for the worship of the One Crucified. Clothed in the Cross as in armor, the martyrs of Christ trampled all the plans of

torturers and preached with plainness the Divine Cross-bearer. Having taken up the Cross for the sake of Christ, those who renounced everything in the world settled in deserts and on mountains, in caves and became the fasters of the earth.

But what language is worthy to praise the Cross, this invincible wall of the Orthodox, this victorious armor of the Heavenly King?! By the cross the Almighty One bestowed unspeakable blessings on humanity!"

"Therefore on the forehead, and on the eyes, and on the mouth, and on the breasts let us place the life-giving Cross. Let us arm them with the invincible armor of Christians, with this hope of the faithful, with this gentle light. Let us open paradise with this armor, with this support of the Orthodox faith, with this saving praise of the Church. Neither in one hour, nor in one instant, let us not forget the Cross, nor let us begin to do anything without it. But let us sleep, let us arise, let us work, let us eat, let us drink, let us go on our way, let us sail on the seas, let us go across the river, let us adorn all our members with the life-giving Cross. And let us not be frightened 'by the terror of the night, nor by the arrow that flies by day, nor by anything roaming in darkness, nor by any calamity, nor any noonday demon' (Ps. 90:5, 6). If, O Christian, you will always take up the Cross of Christ on yourself as a help, then 'evil shall not come towards you, nor any scourge come near your habitation': for the opposition power seeing it trembles and leaves."

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### Synaxarion

Since through the forty-day Fast we are also crucified in a certain way, deadened as we are by the passions, and feel a sense of bitterness, so that we become exhausted and fall down, for this reason the Precious and Life-giving Cross is set forth, to refresh and strengthen us, and to remind us of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. It exhorts us with this thought: If our God was crucified for us, how much ought we to do for Him! It lightens our burdens by comparing them with the afflictions of the Master. It reminds us of the glory that comes through the Cross and gives us the hope of this glory. For, as our Savior ascended the Cross and was glorified through being led around dishonorably and by the bitter treatment that He received, so must we also act, in order that we may be glorified with Him, even if we suffer some unpleasantness for a time.

And we venerate the Cross in other ways. Just as those who traverse a rough and lengthy road and have grown faint through weariness, if they should happen to find a tree that affords plenty of shade, sit down for a while and are refreshed, and, as if rejuvenated, accomplish the remainder of the journey; so now in the season of the Fast and on the laborious road that we traverse, the Life-bearing Cross was planted in the midst by the Holy Fathers, providing us with relaxation and refreshment and making those who have become weary well-equipped and nimble for the subsequent toil. Or, just as at the coming of a king, his banners and scepters precede him, and then he arrives in person, rejoicing and taking delight in his victory and at the same time making his subjects glad; even so our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is soon going to display the Trophy of victory over death and come forth in glory on the day of Resurrection, has sent His scepter in advance, the royal Banner, the Life-giving Cross, preparing us to make ready and welcome Him soon as King, and to praise Him Who has gloriously triumphed.

By the middle week of Holy Lent, the holy period of forty days resembles the spring of Marah because of the discipline that we apply to our bodies and because of the bitterness and weariness that are in us as a result of fasting. Therefore, just as the Divine Moses threw the tree into the middle of that spring and made it sweet, so also God, Who has led us through the noetic Red Sea and away from Pharaoh, sweetens the bitterness from the forty days of fasting with the life-giving Tree of the Precious and Life-giving Cross, consoling us as we spend time in the desert until He leads us up to the noetic Jerusalem through His Resurrection.

Or, since the Cross is called the Tree of Life and is this Tree, and since the Tree of Life was planted in the middle of the Paradise of Eden, it was appropriate that the most Divine Fathers should plant the Tree of the Cross in the middle of the holy forty days, thereby simultaneously reminding us of Adam's gluttony and describing his restoration through the Tree of the Cross. For if we taste of this Tree, we shall no longer die, but be made alive.

By the power of Thy Cross, O Christ our God, protect us from the assaults of the Evil One, and vouchsafe us, having passed through the arena of the forty days with ease, to venerate Thy Divine Passion and Thy Life-bearing Resurrection; and have mercy on us, for Thou alone art good and lovest mankind.