

Parish Prayer List (Living)

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

Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)

Metropolitan Nicholas (+3/13)	Lorraine Solinko (+2/28)
John Beach (+2/27)	Veronica Brickman (+3/5)
Laura Lamby (+3/17)	Michael Baker (+3/26)

Additional Announcements

This week we will continue our study of the penitential Canon of St. Andrew. The study will be after our Friday evening service, as we share a Lenten meal. Please join us for this study! Plus, many, many thanks to everyone who has provided the excellent food thus far.

St. Nicholas needs you! Each of us can render active service to God: We need people to read the epistle during services, the hours before Liturgy and post-communion prayers after Liturgy, or think about your own idea. If you have a desire to help out in any way, please see Fr. James.

Thoughts from the Fathers

Abba Poemen said that Abba John said that the saints are like a group of trees, each bearing different fruit, but watered from the same source. The practices of one saint differ from those of another, but it is the same Spirit that works in all of them. *John the Dwarf, The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*

The light of dawn comes before the sun, and meekness is the precursor of all humility. So let us listen to the order in which Christ, our Light, places these virtues. He says: "Learn from Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." Therefore before gazing at the sun of humility, we must let the light of meekness

flow over us. If we do, we will then be able to look steadily at the sun. The true order of these virtues teaches us that we are totally unable to turn our eyes to the sun before we have first become accustomed to the light.

Meekness is an unchangeable state of mind, which remains the same in honor and dishonor.

Meekness is a rock overlooking the sea of anger, which breaks all the waves that dash against it, yet remains completely unmoved.

Meekness is the fellow-worker with obedience, the guide of the brotherhood, a bridle for the enraged, a check for the irritable, a minister of joy, the imitation of Christ, something proper to angels, shackles for demons, a shield against bitterness.

St. John Climacus, The Ladder of Divine Ascent

"Malice, or any other passion that has taken root in your heart, has a tendency - in accordance with the infallible law of evil - to discharge itself outwardly. This is why it is usually said of an evil or angry man that he has vented his anger upon another person or upon another object. It is the worst of evil that it does not remain in the heart, but tries to diffuse itself outwardly."

St. John of Kronstadt

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Weight of the Cross

Take up your cross, and follow me (Mt. 16, 24)

In one of the parables, one very tired woman, exhausted under the weight of her cross, was praying to receive another one, being sure that it would be much easier. She fell asleep and found herself amongst a lot of crossed of different kinds and sizes, which were lying on the ground. She liked one of them – it was small, decorated with beautiful stones and in a golden frame. “Here it is, - she thought, - I could carry this cross without an effort”. But as soon as she picked it up it began to press her with its weight: gold and stones were so beautiful, but their weight was more than she could handle. There was another one, lying right by it, all in flowers. “This must be

definitely for me!” – she exclaimed and rushed to lift it up. But there were thorns under the beautiful flowers that were poking her body and causing a lot of pain. Finally, she found a plain undecorated cross, in a simple shape and form, without a rich frame, but it had only one word of love written on it. She picked it up and started to carry. It was the least heavy out of all she tried.

And she recognized her own cross in it, which was such a burden for her before. Lord knows what kind of cross we need and which one we will be able to carry. He measures it according to our strength. But we can not judge the weight of the crosses of others. When living in need we enviously look at the rich, but it might be that the precious stones just add the weight to his cross. Somebody else’s life might seem to us flourishing and cloudless, but we don’t see the thorns, hidden underneath the beautiful roses. Therefore, if we have had a chance to try out all the other crosses that are sent by God to the suffering mankind, we would definitely find out that we would not be able to carry any other cross, but our own, which was chosen by the Lord in His love.

From *Diaries of an Orthodox Priest*, 1905 (author unknown)

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On this Sunday, the third Sunday of Lent, we celebrate the veneration of the honorable and Life-Giving Cross, and for this reason: inasmuch as in the forty days of fasting we in a way crucify ourselves.... and become bitter and despondent and failing, the Life-Giving Cross is presented to us for refreshment and assurance, for remembrance of our Lord's Passion, and for comfort.... We are like those following a long and cruel path, who become tired, see a beautiful tree with many leaves, sit in its shadow and rest for a while and then, as if rejuvenated, continue their journey; likewise today, in the time of fasting and difficult journey and effort, the Life-Giving Cross was planted in our midst by the holy fathers to give us rest and refreshment, to make us light and courageous for the remaining

task.... Or, to give another example: when a king is coming, at first his banner and symbols appear, then he himself comes glad and rejoicing about his victory and filling with joy those under him; likewise, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is about to show us His victory over death, and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection Day, is sending us in advance His scepter, the royal symbol-- the Life-Giving Cross-- and it fills us with joy and makes us ready to meet, inasmuch as it is possible for us, the King Himself, and to render glory to His victory.... All this in the midst of Lent which is like a bitter source because of its tears, because also of its efforts and despondency.... but Christ comforts us who are as it were in a desert until he shall lead us up to the spiritual Jerusalem by His Resurrection.... for the Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is the tree that was planted in Paradise, and for this reason our fathers have planted it in the midst of Holy Lent, remembering both Adams bliss and how he was deprived of it, remembering also that partaking of this Tree we no longer die but are kept alive....

From *The Synaxarion of the Sunday of the Cross*

