

Parish Prayer List (Living)

Alexandra	Rachael	Jessilyn	Reader Mark
Andrea	Amanda	Sherry	Thecla
Fr. Michael	Barry	Sean	Susan Mary
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Connie
Lawrence	Emil	Seraphim	Evdokia
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Bob Wedder
Anna	Brian	Carolyn	Karen
Sharon & Bob	Kathy Tanner	Anthony	Pauline
Olga	Marina	Salvatore	Josephine
Nicholas (Nadja's brother)	Nina	Alma	Jason
Tatiana	Clint	Nadja	Travis
Randy	John	Chris	

Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)

John Kesselak (+7/6)	John Maydak (+7/12)
Andrew Kesselak (+7/14)	Protodeacon John Youhas (+7/20)
Shawn Visconti (+7/21)	Andrew Zatorsky (+8/8)

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Coffee Hour:

8/19- Crikis	8/26 - open	9/2 - open
9/9 - open	9/16 - open	9/23 - open
9/30 - open	10/7 - open	10/14 - open

We need volunteers for coffee hour on upcoming Sundays. The sign up sheet will be available during coffee hour this morning.

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Thoughts from the Fathers

Do you see, my fathers and brothers who are friends of God, the grace of this present day? Do you see the lofty and venerable standing of her whom now we praise? Are not the mysteries of her being awe-inspiring? Are they not full of wonder? Blessed are they who can see what is, above all things, worth seeing! Blessed are they who have acquired spiritual senses! What bolts of lightning light up this present night! What companies of angelic guards glorify the falling asleep of the mother who gave us life! What inspired utterances come from the Apostles, pronouncing blessings at the burial of that body that bore God! See how the Word of God, Who

deigned in His tender mercy to be her son, has cared for this holy and godly mother of His with His lordly hands, and has received her sacred soul to himself!

Saint John of Damascus, "On the Dormition of the Holy Mother of God"

The Lord Who, on Sinai, gave the Fifth Commandment: 'Honor thy father and thy mother', showed by His own example how one must reverence one's parents. Hanging in agony on the Cross, He remembered His mother, and, indicating the Apostle John, said to her: 'Woman, behold thy son!', and to John: 'Behold, thy mother!' And, with this concern for His mother, He breathed His last. John had a home on Sion in Jerusalem, where he settled the Mother of God and left her to pass her remaining days on earth. By her prayers, her kindly advice, her meekness and patience, she was of immense help to her Son's apostles. She spent virtually the rest of her life in Jerusalem, often going round the places that reminded her of the great events and the great works associated with and performed by her Son. She especially visited Golgotha, Bethlehem and the Mount of Olives. Of her journeys father afield, her visit to Ignatios the God-Bearer is recorded, as are those to Saint Lazarus the Four-days-dead, Bishop of Cyprus, to the Holy Mountain, to which she gave her blessing, and her stay in Ephesus with John during a fierce persecution of Christians in Jerusalem. In old age, she often prayed to her Lord and God on the Mount of Olives, on the spot from which He ascended, to take her from this world. One day, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and revealed that she would enter into rest in three days time, and the angel gave her a palm-branch to be carried in her funeral procession. She returned home with great joy, with the heartfelt hope that she would see Christ's apostles once more in this life. The Lord fulfilled her desire and all the apostles, brought by angels and clouds, gathered together at John's house on Sion.

Saint Nikolai of Zicha, "The Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God"

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About Confession

What Shall We, Sinners, Do?

This teaching about confession, translated from, what is currently, Ukrainian language, belongs to Meletius the Enlightener, the archbishop of Kharkov and Akhtyr. He left an eternal memory of himself by his zealous life, his meekness, charity, and his fasting. Even during his life he possessed the gifts of special divine grace, and after his repose, many people acquired his prayers and received what they asked for. He reposed in the Lord in 1840. His incorrupt relics remain in a cave church of archbishop's house in Kharkov.

We all have a lot of acquaintances, many benefactors; we have fathers and mothers, and other relatives; they all love us, care for us and preserve us; but no one loves us more than our Lord. He, the Merciful, created us. He nourishes us. He preserves us in the house and outside; he cares for us like we do about our own eyes, but even more. But what we give in return? We, in return for this great mercy, anger our merciful God with our sins. He, the merciful, preserves us at night, but we, when we wake up in the morning, hurry up to our cares, not even having crossed our forehead; go to work and get wrapped around in the worldly cares. Then, one day, look back and realize that we have not done anything good, but sinned all throughout our life.

So shall we remain like that? God forbid! But what shall we do? We see the images of the saints on the icons: there is St.Peter, St.Paul, and St.Martyr Barbara. Have you ever thought about if they all were born saints? Well, I'll tell you, all of them were just simple people, like you and me. They were born, they labored, lived in the world with its needs and sorrows, but they never forgot about God. Whenever they happened to sin, they repented immediately, cried before Him and prayed to Him for forgiveness; and for exactly this our merciful God granted them holiness.

Here's another proof: our Lord and Savior, when He was living on earth amongst us people, said this parable once: two people came to church to pray, one was a Pharisee and another one was a Publican. The Pharisee was a noble man and the Publican was a tax collector. So both of them came and started to pray to God. The Pharisee stood upfront and started to praise himself: see, Lord! I thank you that I am not like this Publican. I do everything like you say: I fast twice a week, give alms to the poor, and I don't commit adultery. He said a lot like that and so loud that everyone heard him how he prayed.

But the Publican, remembering his sins, was standing behind everyone and crying. He did not dare to lift his eyes because he considered himself the greatest sinner. He remembered every time he was dishonest and every time he took away too much, he thought he was unworthy to live in the world and in that sorrow he wept to God: My God! Be merciful to me, a sinner! In that sorrow the Publican was ready to tell everyone about his sins, only if the Lord would forgive him. He wept and lamented back by the door, reproaching himself for everything he did and was begging for God's mercy. And what was the outcome? The merciful God forgave him all of his sins and the Publican, after all those tears of repentance, left the church justified and

cleansed. But what about the Pharisee? Pharisee did not get any good from his self-praise. He praised himself and God did not hear him. Pharisee left in the same condition as he came in. Why? Because he was praising himself!

My good Christian brothers! You stand in the church in front of God; and it's been many days that you've been coming to church to pray to the merciful God. And you are going to confession again today. What do you do that for? So that we would receive forgiveness from God for whichever sins everyone is guilty of. You've confessed before, but do you know what is a true confession?

There are some God-fearing Christians that they tell all the truth about their sins at confession: this kind of people comes out of confession just like that Publican. And there are such people, and there are a lot of them, that are dumb during confession, they say nothing, no matter what you ask them, or they reply the same to every question: don't remember, don't know, never ever! So, is there a benefit in this kind of confession? – Oh, no! See, the Publican received absolution from his sins when he remembered all of them and did not just stand there silent, but was crying and lamenting before God; he was ready to tell everyone about what he's done, his every sin. And when it is like that, that you want your confession to be useful, you need to tell all that you've done that angered the Heavenly Father. Do you think it is enough to go to church for a couple of days, stand there, say nothing, cross yourself, bow down and that's it? My dear good Christians! You need to give up this custom of a dumb confession; do good for your soul, don't be negligent. Just think, you don't like it when you catch your son or your worker in some wrong doing, you start asking him, but he wouldn't tell? You get upset at him for this, start getting angry that he would not admit? You are just a creature and you get angry; how is it possible that you want your dumb confession to be pleasing to God, our Creator? But if the guilty one will start crying before you, you will forgive him, won't you? Same is our Lord, he is ready to forgive, but we need to humble ourselves and weep that we have angered our Creator and God.

Do not stumble, don't be ashamed and tell everything: when you got drunk, when you used foul language, when offended someone, when false witnessed. You sigh and weep before God and your condition will get better. Why not tell everything? Who are you ashamed of? Your confessor is a sinner himself and he won't laugh at you, and he'd rather die himself before he tells anyone what you just told him. So why should you be ashamed? For the love of God, do not be afraid, don't be ashamed and tell all the truth what you've done! The merciful Lord will not reproach you for your sins: God will forgive all of your sins after a heartfelt confession before your confessor. And if He forgives, He will never remember them again, if you don't fall into the same sins again.

Grant, o Lord, that your fasting and confession be of great benefit to you and pleasing to our merciful Creator! And this will happen when you sincerely confess all of your sins and do not repeat them again, and will live in accordance with the Law of God! Amen

Translated from Russian