

Parish Prayer List (Living)

(Parish)

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|-------------|----------------|----------|------------|
| Evangelos | Carolyn | Robert | Sharon |
| John | Maria | Anamay | Ron |
| Lawrence | Dianna | Efthalia | Denny |
| Anthony | Paula | Kathleen | John L. |
| Beverly | David | Michael | Anastasia |
| Nina | Walter | Nathan | Mary |
| Joseph | Duncan | Thecla | Michael |
| Reader Mark | Jason | Silouan | Susan Mary |
| Maximus | Emilia | Clint | George |
| Magdalini | Connie | Emil | John H. |
| Barbara | John | Pam | Gracie |
| Olga | Marina | Seraphim | Maria |
| Sophia | Danny | Katina | Jeffery |
| Andrea | Subdn. Gregory | Nicholas | Mary |
| Rachel | Katherine | Lily | Joyce |

(non-Parish)

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alexandra | Rachael | Seraphim | Evdokia |
| Christopher | Fr. Michael | Paige and Paul | Sean |
| James | Nicholas B. | Karin | Meg |
| Barry Pierce | Rick P. | Susan K | Penny |
| Anna | Brian | Hugh | Raymond |
| Judy | Megan | John Howard | Charles Kahn |
| Peter | Maria | Michael | Timothy |
| Petrese | Mary | Thomas Pappas | Lillian Pappas |
| Pietra & Piero | Michael | Grover | Valentina |
| Mike | Ron | Brian | |

Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)

Theodoros Kontos (8/29)

Mary Grace Beall (+9/2)

Mark Kesselak (+9/2)

Olga Rustick (+9/13)

Richard Lynn (+10/11)

Lois Lynn (+10/24)

Thoughts from the Fathers

For each of us death is the end of this age; it is the door to the other life. Look into this more often and determine for yourself more truly: what will happen then? And having determined this without pitying yourself, begin laboring to prepare that which in you is not ready, that you might enter the place where joy is unending. Labor to push aside all that could give the servants of outer darkness the right to prevail over us and carry us away to their realm, whence there will no longer be a way out.

~Saint Theophan the Recluse

Prayer is the lifting up of the mind and heart to God, the contemplation of God, the daring converse of the creature with the Creator, the soul standing reverently before Him, as before the King, before Life himself, Who gives life to all.

~Saint John of Kronstadt

At one time the spirit of despair laid hold of me - it seemed to me that God had finally rejected me, and there was no salvation for me, that, on the contrary, my soul bore evidence of everlasting damnation. And I felt in my soul that God was merciless and deaf to entreaty. This lasted an hour or a little over. A humor of this kind is so oppressive, so harrowing, that even to recall it terrifies. The soul cannot bear it for long. In moments such as these man may well be lost for all eternity. Such was the battle which the Merciful Lord allowed the spirit of evil to wage with my soul. A short time elapsed. I went into church, to Vespers, and looking at the ikon of the Savior I cried: 'Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me, a sinner.' And as I uttered these words I saw the living Lord in the place where the ikon was, and the grace of the Holy Spirit flooded my soul and my whole body. And so it was I came to know through the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ is God; and I was filled with a sweet longing to endure suffering for His sake.

~Saint Silouan the Athonite

God seeks only one thing: that you honor Him, love Him, and keep His commandments, acknowledging that He is your Maker. He does not want you to divide His glory and to worship other things instead of Him. For this reason, when He gave His commandments to Moses through the divinely written law, He said, "Hear, O Israel, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thine heart, and with all thy might, and with all thy mind" (Dt. 6:5) .. He has left no room for your love to incline anywhere else, but absolutely all the desire of your soul should be to love the Lord. In this manner, His grace will dwell upon you. The heart does not tolerate

divisions. “Thou shalt bow down to thy God alone and Him shalt serve” (Jn.14:23).

~Elder Joseph the Hesychast

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What Makes a Priest Rejoice at Confession

Hieromonk Nektary (Morozov) / 15 September 2014



What gives you joy when one person after another lines up to take confession? Not when you hear the confession that many call, “on duty”, but when you become a witness to change that’s happened (perhaps even before your very eyes) in a person; when you have become the witness of his struggle, the result of his work on himself and the action of God’s grace that goes with it. This is always experienced as a marvelous miracle-the most important and most necessary of all miracles, the most unbelievable and most saving.

However, it’s not only the miracle that makes you rejoice, but even the more for the person standing before you. He just now stood far from God, was veritably shrouded in a twilight shadow, and in an amazing way happened this turnaround, this conversion and return to the Father; and he is no longer in that deathly shadow, but in the light that illumines him and you together.

A person can repent of the most terrible sins, the most barbaric evil-doing; his tale may be bitter and worthy of tears. But if an inner change occurs, that very “metanoia”, that is, a change of mind, or more precisely, of the entire human personality, there

is no feeling of weariness. To the contrary: the soul becomes so light, like after a thunderstorm when the thunder claps and the lightning strikes, and the water pours down to cleanse and refresh the poor, sinful earth.

Usually when you hear another's confession or when you yourself confess, you think, "For what does the Lord love us so much?! No, of course He doesn't love us for something, but in spite of everything..." And here something reveals itself to you... It's the beauty of the human soul that words cannot express-wondrous, primordial, hidden usually by the deformity of the passions, the wounds of vice, the scabs of sins. It reveals itself-and you understand at last why the Creator loves His creation: As St. Ignatius (Brianchaninov) says, in a drop of dew, in the human soul is reflected the light of the Sun, the light of the Divinity, and you admire it in a moment, giving thanks for this mercy and gift.

And more... you rejoice because you feel that you are not standing there in vain in your priest's stole before the analogion with the Gospels and Cross; nor is your tiny labor in vain or futile, and there is some benefit from your service, your prayer, your words, or at least from your attention and inner sympathy. You are only a witness, and not the performer (there is only one true Performer!), but how good it is that this witness is not fruitless!

And, of course in order to feel and experience all this it is not necessary to see another Mary of Egypt turning from a harlot into a great saint, or Abba Moses the Ethiopian, a murdering thief who once brought fear to all but later became the humblest of monks. You don't necessarily have to hear a confession filled with dramatic details, "unusual" or "out of the ordinary". There may not be anything particular to its content. The main thing is that very feeling of change spoken of above. The main thing is the feeling that the person is truly laboring, and the Lord accepts and blesses that labor. And that painful, by no means swift, modest and yet infinitely glorious-ascent to the heights.