

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

Alexandra	Rachael	Paige	Reader Mark
Andrea	Amanda	Sherry	Joretta
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
Pani Magdaline	Kathy Tanner	Anthony	Pauline
Olga	Marina	Salvatore	

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

Nicholas Georgeopoulos (+11/3) Mildred Zelko (+10/31)  
Mary Beach (+10/27)

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## ***Coffee Hour Schedule***

November 13 – Shenberger

November 20 – open

November 27 – open

December 4 – St. Nicholas  
Day

December 11-- open

December 18 -- open

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## ***Schedule of Epistle Readers***

November 13 – Misha S.

November 20 – Bob Piljay

November 27 – Billy

December 4 – Misha S.

December 11 – Bob Piljay

December 18 – Billy

Please let me know if you would like to added to the list of Epistle readers, or if you will not be available on the day when you are scheduled.

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## ***Words from the Fathers***

We are not compelled to love God, having been created with free will. God does not, nor can He, compel His creatures to love Him. Mutual love requires, by it's very nature, freedom to either respond in love, or not. Yet when we respond to God's love with love His mercy leads us into holiness, for entering into this relationship with our Creator transforms us, changes

us. When we respond to God's offer to commune with Him, He changes us into His likeness. We were meant from the beginning to be in His image and likeness and our positive response to the invitation to enter into divine communion leads to holiness.

*Abbot Tryphon, All-Merciful Saviour Monastery*

What is the use of laboring and toiling with the body night and day, if inwardly we do not take care to pull out the roots from which all evil sprouts? We have an absolute need for watchfulness and unceasing prayer in order to cast off the evil which lurks within us and replace it with spiritual good.

*Elder Ephraim of Philotheou on the Holy Mountain*

Amma Theodora said, Let us strive to enter by the narrow gate. Just as the trees, if they have not stood before the winter's storms cannot bear fruit, so it is with us; this present age is a storm and it is only through many trials and temptations that we can obtain an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.

*The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*

The bread you do not use is the bread of the hungry. The garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked. The shoes you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot. The money you keep locked away is the money of the poor. The acts of charity you do not perform are the injustices you commit.

*St. Basil the Great*

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### **The Call to Trust the Lord in an Age of Acute Anxiety**

*Fr. Josiah Trenham*

Besides being an age of urbanization and radical individualism, contemporary life is an age of acute anxiety. The 20th century has been dubbed by some intellectuals the "age of anxiety." That the last 100 years has witnessed a marked increase in anxiety levels and the numerous pathologies, such as depression, which stem from acute anxiety is a matter of scientific fact. In an authoritative and widely distributed article, Case Western Reserve University Psychology Professor, Jean M. Twenge, documents through two meta-analyses of various sociological groups in

America the effect of changing cultural times on personality development. Twenge documents the increase in anxiety levels in our culture in the last half-century, and argues that changes in the larger sociocultural environment have been a leading cause: changes such as the increase in violent crime, worries concerning nuclear war, fear of disease such as AIDS, and the entrance of women into higher education and the workplace (a place of great stress). These contributing factors are exacerbated by media coverage, which leads to a greater perception of overall environmental threat.

More people visit doctors for anxiety than for colds. Anxiety is a predisposing factor for major depression and suicide attempts. Another area in which anxiety levels can be measured is in the prevalence of drug treatment for anxiety and depression. The common use of Prozac, so common that in recent times some one-fourth of the adult American population had been treated with it, is a major signal. Depression is an epidemic in our society. We live in an age of melancholy.

Many of our contemporary spiritual elders, such as Elder Paisios the Athonite, have addressed the anxiety of modern man. Elder Paisios taught that modern man is afflicted with three unique pains: divorce, cancer, and mental anxiety and illness. Out of his great love for his fellow man, Father Paisios wished to bear some of the burden. He could not bear the pain of divorce since he was not married, and he did not want to suffer mental anxiety and illness because it would affect his prayer. So he prayed for and received cancer, and taught modern men how to bear it for God. He wrote that cancer, with its typical drawn out process of killing its victim, has led untold numbers to repentance and has populated Paradise.

We have become an anxious people because our sins have increased, and our faith has waned. The 20th century was a century of acute anxiety because it was a century of hideous violence and unbridled licentiousness. Several years ago, in an effort to understand the 20th century better, I read Sir Martin Gilbert's three-volume *History of the 20th Century*. His masterful work left me with a profound awareness of the 20th century as the most violent hundred years in the history of mankind. This is a judgment made by the World Wars and atrocities against human rights that filled the century. When the new abortion holocaust, which has taken the lives of more than 50 million unborn children in the last 34 years, is taken account violence becomes the defining motif of the century. Violence was the particular sin of Noah's age that provoked the wrath of the Lord God to bring the universal flood upon mankind. Certainly the Almighty cannot be pleased with the last hundred years, a century that many would like to forget.

We Christian believers must address our culture's worry head-on. We are

called by Jesus Christ to witness by our confidence and trust in Him in an anxious age. We must live a life of serene trust in the Lord, the life of faith, and call our fellow man to such a trust. Saint John Chrysostom can be of great assistance to us in this calling. Chrysostom's life was full of earthly sorrows: the loss of his father as an infant, and of his mother and sister as a young man; physical illnesses; tormenting passions; a turbulent and unstable civil and ecclesiastical ethos; kidnapping and displacement; immense pastoral responsibilities; sustained opposition; false accusation by his brother bishops at the Synod of the Oak; imperial trickery; banishment and death in exile. Yes, it sounds like a Saint's life does it not? One large cross upon which the Saint resolved to stay.

In the midst of these very sorrows Chrysostom found tremendous joy, and lived through them all by trusting confidently in the will of God. His most precious writings on this subject of faith in time of anxiety are, no doubt, those that were written by him while in exile. Here we have words crafted out of the very heat of the furnace, and we see the triumph of his faith. Two treatises particularly I would like to call to your attention. These two treatises were composed by Chrysostom in exile, not long before his death, in order to comfort his dear friend the Deaconess, Saint Olympias, who was suffering from extreme depression due to her spiritual father's banishment.

The first is a small work, some fifteen pages, entitled *That No One Can Harm the Man Who Does Not Injure Himself*. In this beautiful work, Chrysostom teaches that there is only one thing in life to fear, only one thing to be anxious about. That one thing is sin. It is the only thing we should fear, and if we do fear it, then we will never have to fear anything else at all because the good God will see to it that nothing harms him who puts his trust in Him. I commend to each of you the reading of this profound treatise. The second work is longer, perhaps 100 pages (and needing its first English translation), entitled *On Providence*. In this more extended treatise, Chrysostom provides numerous justifications from reason and the creation to put one's complete confidence in the governance of the Lord God, reminds his readers of the security of being a child of the one God, Who is the Father Almighty. God has the heart of a Father for us, and the resources of the Almighty to put a Father's heart into action. There is no suffering endured in faith by the believer which will not be redemptive. And lastly, Chrysostom calls upon believers to remain in reverent silence before human outcomes and developments that are beyond our comprehension. Confident silence is the best response to events which we cannot understand. It was with such faith, such serene trust in the Lord God, that Chrysostom came to his end, lay down, received the Holy Gifts, made his Cross, and uttered his final words, with which I will conclude my lecture: "Glory to God for all things."