

August 2014



SAINT INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH

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August 2014 Newsletter

When I am invited to talk at local colleges I often struggle to find a common language with the students. How does one describe what one believes and has experienced to people who may have no context?

In a class room it is easy to reduce the Christian faith a set of “do’s” and “don’ts” or to reduce the faith to dogmatic proclamations about the nature of God. Our faith certainly has “do’s and don’ts” and important dogmatic teachings, however, our faith is not primarily about rules or refined theological propositions about God. The Christian faith is a faith that moves beyond “teachings” into the uncomfortable realm of encounter. Fr. Zacharias in his work the Hidden Man of the Heart states that “true theology is a narrative story of encounter, a meeting with God.”

It is one thing to read and learn about a person, it is quite another to truly encounter and come to know a person. For example, if I were to friend you on Facebook, I would be able to see all your pictures, read your profiles, read your history and come to know a lot about you. Your page would tell me everything you are willing to share about yourself. However, if you were to



move in with me and my family, and talk, eat and live with me, over time we would come to know each other. Over time we would truly encounter and come to know each other.

Our goal as Christians is not to simply fill up on knowledge about God, but rather, to come to know in an intimate way the living God. This “knowing” of God takes time and effort like any other healthy relationship we have. Coming to know God also requires openness and

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vulnerability. To truly know others we have to be willing to be known.

We live in a time where the primary emphasis is on learning about God rather than seeking to know the living God. In most instances the people I have encountered only want to hear what we teach about God. It could be said that the people of our time (myself included) are, “always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” 2 Timothy 3:7. It seems everyone is an expert these days because the faith is often reduced down to a collection of theological opinions. Yet, there is a scarcity of sanctity because it is harder to travel the path of relating to the invisible God.

In Matthew 7 Jesus gives us an unsettling teaching that should challenge every Christian. Jesus states, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”

As Christians what we do or don’t do is important; what we dogmatically profess is also important; but most important is that we seek to know and to be known by God. Knowledge about God does not save, we are only saved by coming to know the living God. May our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ bless us to encounter and grow our relationship with the living God.

In Christ,

Fr. Theophan

Sunday Gospel Readings

August	3	Matt. 14:14-22
	10	Matt 14:22-34
	17	Matt. 17:14-23
	24	Matt. 18:23-55
	31	Matt. 19:16:26



Announcements

- The Dormition fast starts on Friday August 1st. Orthodox Christians are asked to abstain from meat and dairy during this fast. Here is a brief explanation of [why we fast for Dormition?](#)
- On Sunday August 3rd around 12:30pm Fr. Theophan will be starting a series of classes about the Divine Liturgy. These classes will have 4 parts and will be offered on Sunday's in our church. The first class will be a general introduction with questions and answers. Please think of any questions you would like answered. We will be covering basic practices and talking about the meaning of what we are doing in our worship. Any and all are welcome.
- On August 5/6th we will celebrate the Great feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord. Vigil will be served at 6pm on Tuesday and the Divine Liturgy on Wednesday morning at 9am. It is a custom to bring fruit to the Liturgy to have it blessed on this day.
- It is a custom in many Orthodox communities to serve the [Paraklesis to the Mother of God](#) during the Dormition fast. We will be serving the Paraklesis service on both Wednesday's 8/6, 8/13 during the fast in place of Vespers. This service is also called a Supplicatory canon for all spiritual afflictions and is prayed in any time of need or distress.
- The Parish Council is scheduled to meet at 6pm on Thursday August 24th.
- Church Cleanup is scheduled for Saturday August 16th at 10:30am.
- Confessions are heard every Saturday from 5-6pm (unless there is a Vigil), before Sunday Liturgy if there is a need, and by appointment.

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Many Years!

Birthdays

August	5	Barry Lee
	14	Jacob Plummer
	26	Eric Olson

Anniversaries

August	6	Fr. Theophan and Pres. Elena
	13	John and Heidi Hintermaier
	15	Barry and Bianca Lee
	20	Paul and Linda Tatcher
	20	Peter and Olga Uchakin
	27	Allen and Leann Almquist

A quote from St. Issac the Syrian:

“The ark of Noah was built in the time of peace, and its timbers were planted by him a hundred years beforehand. In the time of wrath the evil man perished, but the ark became the shelter for the righteous.”

Things to note: Noah patiently prepares even when there is no sign of trouble. The daily things we do to build up our spiritual life will become our refuge when temptations or trials come.

Save the Date:

St. Innocent Bible and BBQ Saturday October 25, 2014



On **Saturday October 25, 2014**, St. Innocent Orthodox Church will be hosting our 4th Annual St. Innocent Bible and BBQ from 11pm -4pm. We will be offering complimentary barbeque with fixings, Eastern European food, educational church tours, and a guest speaker. This year our guest speaker is Rev. Barnabas Powell. He will be speaking on

“Timeless Wisdom to Tame the Passions.” Here is a brief description of our event.

“Christians often talk of living in a “fallen world,” a world that surrounds them with tragedy, death, and disappointment. In confronting this external reality, however, they often fail to consider how this “fallenness” is experienced inside each one of us. Yet how often do we speak of being spiritually sick, exhausted, broken? There are many modern approaches to this “soul sickness,” from medication to meditation, from shaming oneself to “toughing things out” by ignoring the condition.

In the Early Church these illnesses of the soul were simply called the “passions.” Dealing with these passions, the Church said, required not their eradication, but their “domestication”: they literally can and should become elements of spiritual healing.

On Saturday, October 25, 2014, St. Innocent Orthodox Christian Church will host two talks by the Rev. Barnabas Powell on “Timeless Wisdom to Tame the Passions.” Pastor of Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene Greek Orthodox Church in Cumming GA, he is a prolific blogger, and has podcast on “Ancient Faith Radio.” Before his conversion to the Orthodox Church in the mid- ‘90s, he was for many years a Charismatic Evangelical pastor.

Come and join us in considering the Ancient Christian approach to taming the passions. Find out how Christians for two millennia have dealt with their sense of brokenness. The first presentation will begin at 11am with a second talk at 2:30pm. Between talks there will be free open air barbeque, Eastern European Food (Russian/Romanian/Moldavian, etc.) and Church tours. We will also have crafts and games for the kids, and church tours until 4 PM.”

This event is not a fundraiser for our community but rather an opportunity for people to come and learn about Orthodox Christianity and experience our hospitality. In order for this to be a success we will need everyone to get the word out by inviting people. Last year we served over 250 people. Like last year we will need a lot of help from everyone in our community to make this event a success. Please begin to think of areas where you may be of service. We cannot do it without you!

Transfiguration of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ August 6th



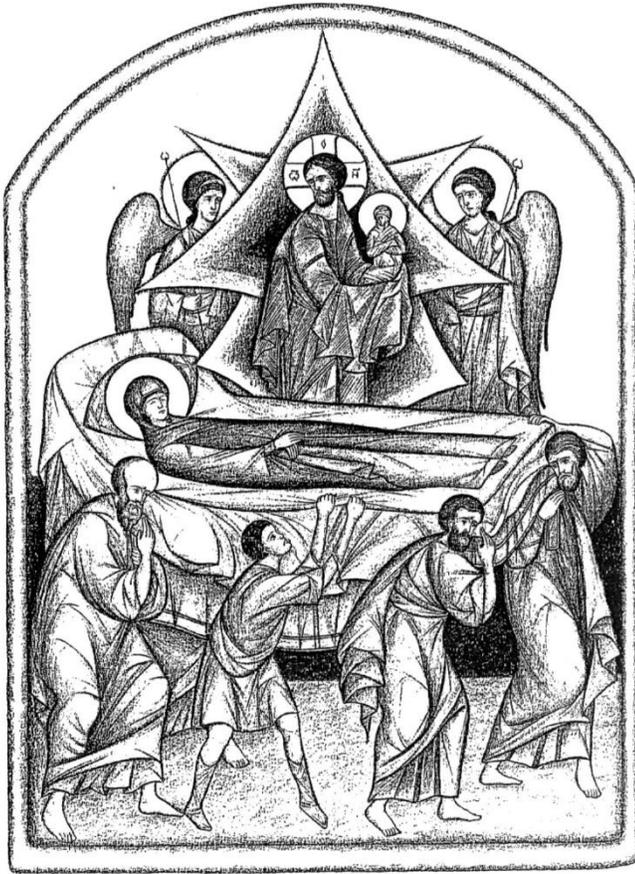
Our Lord had spoken to His disciples many times not only concerning His Passion, Cross, and Death, but also concerning the coming persecutions and afflictions that they themselves would endure. Since all these evils were near at hand, but the enjoyment of good things which they hoped to receive in their stead was yet to come, our Savior desired to give them full assurance, evidently and openly, concerning that glory which is prepared for those who endure to the end.

Therefore, fulfilling that which He had promised shortly before, that "there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom" (Matt. 16:28), He took His three foremost disciples and ascended Mount Tabor, where He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as the light. Suddenly, together with this dread and marvelous effulgence of light, there appeared those pinnacles of the Prophets, Moses and Elias, who spoke with the Lord Jesus concerning His saving Passion which was about to take place. Standing before Him as reverent servants, they showed that He is the Lord of both the living and the dead, for Moses came forth from Hades, having died

many centuries before, and Elias, as it were from heaven, whither he had been taken up while yet alive. After a little while a radiant cloud overshadowed them and out of the cloud they heard that same voice which had been heard at the Jordan at the Baptism of Christ, testifying to the Divinity of Jesus and saying: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased; hear ye Him" (Matt. 17: 5).

Such are the marvels, truly worthy of God, celebrated in this present feast, which is an image and prefiguring of the future state of the righteous, whose splendor the Lord spoke of, saying: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun" (Matt. 13:43). It is because of this that the Kontakion of this Feast is said daily (when there is not a great feast) in the Service of the Typica in perpetual commemoration of the glory that will be the lot of the Saints. According to tradition, the Lord's Transfiguration came to pass forty days before His Crucifixion; this is why the Transfiguration is celebrated forty days before the Exaltation of the Cross.

The Dormition of Our Most-Holy Lady The Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary August 15th



Concerning the Dormition of the Theotokos, this is what the Church has received from ancient times from the tradition of the Fathers. When the time drew nigh that our Savior was well-pleased to take His Mother to Himself, He declared unto her through an Angel that three days hence, He would translate her from this temporal life to eternity and bliss. On hearing this, she went up with haste to the Mount of Olives, where she prayed continuously. Giving thanks to God, she returned to her house and prepared whatever was necessary for her burial.

While these things were taking place, clouds caught up the Apostles from the ends of the earth, where each one happened to be preaching, and brought them at once to the house of the Mother of God, who informed them of the cause of their sudden gathering. As a mother, she consoled them in their affliction as was meet, and then raised her hands to Heaven and prayed for the peace of the world. She blessed the Apostles, and, reclining upon her bed with seemliness, gave up her all-holy spirit into the hands of her Son and God.

With reverence and many lights, and chanting burial hymns, the Apostles took up that God-receiving body and brought it to the sepulcher, while the Angels from Heaven chanted with them, and sent forth her who is higher than the Cherubim. But one Jew, moved by malice, audaciously stretched forth his hand upon the bed and immediately received from divine judgment the wages of his audacity. Those daring hands were severed by an invisible blow. But when he repented and asked forgiveness, his hands were restored.

When they had reached the place called Gethsemane, they buried there with honor the all-immaculate body of the Theotokos, which was the source of Life. But on the third day after the burial, when they were eating together, and raised up the bread in Jesus' Name, as was their custom, the Theotokos appeared in the air, saying "Rejoice" to them. From this they learned concerning the bodily translation of the Theotokos into the Heavens.

These things has the Church received from the traditions of the Fathers, who have composed many hymns out of reverence, to the glory of the Mother of our God.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1  Beginning of the Dormition Fast	2  5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
3  9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape 12:30pm Class	4	5 6pm Vigil for the Transfiguration 7pm Bolingbroke Community Club	6   9am Divine Liturgy for the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ 6pm Paraklesis	7 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	8	9   Outreach Committee Meeting 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
10  9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape 12:30pm Class	11	12	13   6pm Paraklesis	14 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 6pm Vigil for Dormition	15   9am Divine Liturgy for the Dormition of the Most-Holy Theotokos	16 10:30am Church Cleanup 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
17 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape 12:30pm Class	18	19	20 6pm Daily Vespers	21 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	22	23 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
24 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape 12:30pm Class	25	26	27 6pm Daily Vespers	28 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	29  Beheading of St. John the Baptist	30 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
31 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape						

St. Innocent Orthodox Church September 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Church New Year Labor Day	2 7pm Bolingbroke Community Club meeting	3 6pm Daily Vespers	4 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	5	6 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
7 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape Church School Kick off Coffee hour @ the Buck's	8 Nativity of the Most- Holy Theotokos	9	10 6pm Daily Vespers	11 8am MCMA Meeting 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 6pm Parish Council Meeting	12	13 4pm Confession 5pm Vigil for the Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross
14 🇺🇸 Fasting Day 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape 12:30 Church School	15 Fr. Theophan out of town	16 Fr. Theophan out of town	17 Fr. Theophan out of town 6pm Readers Vespers	18 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	19	20 10:30am Church Cleanup 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
21 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape 12pm Baptism	22	23	24 🐟 🇺🇸 6pm Daily Vespers	25 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	26 🐟 🇺🇸	27
28 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45 Agape 12:30 Church School	29	30				