



SAINT INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH

7301 Rivoli Road, Macon, GA 31210

Fr. Theophan #478-538-8161, email fr.theophan@st-innocent.org

www.st-innocent.org

September 2016 Newsletter

How to raise an Orthodox Christian, and, possibly, a saint.

By Bishop Alexander (Mileant)

(As you read this, feel free to apply this to your own spiritual life)

- 1) When the child is yet young, begin to train him/her in sympathy and consideration for others and in unselfishness. By these means he/she will grow up to understand that the material things of this world are not the most important things for Orthodox Christians. Your life-style and example will be the greatest influence on your child in this matter.
- 2) Teach your child how to chant the psalms and the hymns of the Church. This will encourage him or her to learn to love the holy services, and to reject the foul language and immodest songs that are so widespread today in our society. Your example in this will have the greatest influence on your child.
- 3) Never cease from finding occasions to train your child in spiritual matters and in the love of God and others, and always bring them to the Church. When we were



small, we were never asked "if" we were coming to church - or anywhere else, for that matter. The fact that we were going to church was a foregone conclusion. Your child must learn this from the very earliest years. If you wait until your child reaches adolescence, it will already be far too late.

September 2016

- 4) Teach your child the meaning of the words "right" and "wrong," "sin" and "virtue," "truth" and "falsehood" ; also teach your child to know the Church's Faith, and to recognize erroneous belief. In this manner, your child's understanding and spiritual discretion will grow as the years go by, and he/she will be prepared for the future, even if he/she has to endure hate and persecution for his/her convictions.
- 5) Give your child spiritual duties appropriate to his/her age and understanding. These could include such activities as reading the *Lives of the Saints* written for your child's level, or reciting some of the evening prayers together with the rest of the family, or fasting and making prostrations, or helping out in church if he or she is old enough.
- 6) Aside from providing your child with plenty of Orthodox spiritual literature appropriate for his/her age, make sure that material of an impure or inappropriate nature is not in your home. Unfortunately, today this includes most of television programming. Remember: whatever goes in, comes out. Your example in this matter will have the greatest influence on your child.
- 7) Your own life-style, your personal tastes, your words, the books you read, the music you listen to, and the things that draw your interest and attention will all speak louder to your child than anything else. Hallow your child's eyes with the holy icons. Sanctify his hearing with the holy hymns, his sense of smell with sacred incense, and his entire body and soul with the holy Mysteries. If your home is a haven of spiritual sanity, love, and peace, your child will know where to turn when he or she inevitably encounters the blasphemous, shocking,

and sordid things that fill our society. Teach your child the Jesus Prayer. In connection with this last matter, I remember the following story: Some twenty years ago, on the Greek island of Oinoussae, which lies opposite the large Aegean island of Chios, there was a married priest who served the spiritual and liturgical needs of the sacred Convent of the Annunciation there. This clergyman had four or five children, and every morning he lined them up for a "review." He interrogated them to learn if they had, upon arising from bed, made the sign of the cross, said their prayers, washed their faces, brushed their teeth, scrubbed behind their ears, and dressed nicely and appropriately. Then he would wave his prayer rope in front of them and ask "And now, children, what is this?" Holding their prayer ropes in their hands, the children would lift them in a salute, and cry aloud "Our weapons!"

- 8) Instruct your child in almsgiving and compassion towards those who are in need. And teach them also that they should help in house duties and, if they are old enough, that they should labor at various odd jobs, so that they may learn from an early age that, as the Holy Apostle Paul tells us, one who does not labor should not eat. Idleness and affluence together have, in our society, destroyed countless young people and led them into sin and even an early death. Never be ashamed to say to your child: "We can't afford it."
- 9) Teach your child by your own example - and by the examples found in the Holy Scriptures and the *Lives of the Saints* - that abstinence from food and drink and personal comforts is a noble and beautiful thing, taught to us by our Savior Himself and by the Saints. Aside from being good for our souls, austerity

September 2016

is also good for our little planet. Whenever I visit our parish of Saint Nectarios in Seattle, there is Divine Liturgy every day. After the service on weekdays, a group of us usually go to a nearby restaurant to have a cup of coffee, a muffin, etc. Over the years, the waitresses have learned about our fast days - "Oh, okay, it's one of those days," they say, when our orders are particularly small. "Yes," I reply, "it's a Low Environmental Impact Day."

- 10) Be fair if it should ever happen that your child gets into a dispute with another child, or with teachers, or with other authorities. If your child is wrong, he/she is wrong, and show him/her, together with your love and support, why he/she is wrong. Your child will learn something of God's justice from your example.
- 11) As the years pass, if you persist faithfully in these matters, as you must, you will discover, much to your surprise, that you have grown spiritually also. Saint Paul was quite serious when he said that "a woman shall be saved by childbearing"- and we know and understand that, especially in a society such as ours, both parents are essential for the proper kind of Orthodox Christian spiritual nurturing that is needed.
- 12) Prepare yourself for a life of spiritual struggles and prayers. You and your children will need them and the grace of God, for we are not living in the world as God originally created it. We are living in occupied territory-a land occupied by the enemy. But, by our holy Faith and God's grace, we are nonetheless a free people, living in hope and expectation of our deliverance in our true and everlasting country. And if we are heedful in these matters, we will have the boldness to say to our Savior in that last day, "Behold me,

your servant, and the children which Thou hast given me."

By the intercessions of Saints Joachim and Anna, O Christ God, may we, together with all our little ones, be deemed worthy of the Heavenly Kingdom. Amen.

Announcements

- Thursday September 8th we the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos. We will have Great Vespers on Wednesday at 6pm and the festal Divine Liturgy at 9am on Thursday.
- On Tuesday and Wednesday, September 13/14 we celebrate the Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross. On Tuesday at 6pm we will serve Vigil. On Wednesday at 9am we will celebrate the festal Divine Liturgy.
- On September 15th Fr. Theophan will be starting another unit of Clinical Pastoral Education which means he will be tied up on Thursday mornings through February.
- The Parish Council is scheduled to meet on Thursday, September 15th at 6pm.
- Church School for our youth will begin on Sunday, September 18.

How to read your Bible

On Sunday, September 18th at 12:30pm we will start a new series of classes on the Orthodox approach to reading and understanding the Scriptures. Dr. Gary Cox will be the main teacher for this series of classes. Please come and invite others who might be interested.

Book Club

On Tuesday, October 4, 2016 at 6:30pm we will meet at Jessica Wallace's house for the Book Club. The book we will be discussing is *Precious Vessels of the Holy Spirit* by Andrew Middleton. Copies are available in our bookstore for \$15. Light refreshments will be provided by the host. All are welcome.



Save the Date, Sunday, November 13, 2016 Annual Parish Meeting

Every year St. Innocent Orthodox Church has the Annual Parish Meeting, a meeting wherein we vote on various measures that directly affect the life of our community. Our bylaws tell us that the APM is the “highest authority of the Parish as a civil corporation.” The APM is a good place to get in touch with what the mission of our parish is and how we are accomplishing this mission. It is also an opportunity for people to participate in the life of our community and give input.

The parish APM is scheduled for Sunday, November 13 after the Divine Liturgy. Every member of the parish has important responsibilities to consider in preparation for the APM.

- ❖ **The Budget Committee cannot do its work until parish members submit their annual pledges for 2017. The 2017 pledge forms are available and are due in by Sunday, September 27. As is always the case, the amount pledged by any individual or family is kept in strict confidence.**
- ❖ **A second task is to assemble the agenda for the APM. Anyone having issues they would like to see addressed in the agenda for this annual meeting is requested to make them known to Father or a member of the PC as soon as possible. Keep in mind here that the formal notification for the APM, with accompanying final agenda, must begin on Sunday, October 30. So all agenda items need to be submitted before that date in order to be vetted before the PC.**

The APM is vital for the life and health of our parish. The PC requests, therefore, that parishioners begin to prepare now for this important event through their pledges, their help in shaping the agenda, and their willingness to set aside time to attend this meeting.

The PC thanks you all for all the help and support you have tendered over the past year. We’ve been privileged in some small way to represent and serve you.

The Parish Council,
(Heidi, Eric, Kimberly, Molly, and Toni)

September 2016

September 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Church New Year 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	2	3 1-5pm 20 th Anniversary Celebration w/Bp Alexander 6pm Great Vespers
4 9:30am Greet Bishop 10am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy 12pm Agape	5 Labor Day	6	7 6pm Great Vespers	8 9am Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of the Theotokos 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	9	10 8-4pm Fr. Theophan in Helena, GA 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
11 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	12	13 6pm Vigil for the Exaltation of the Cross	14 9am Divine Liturgy for the Exaltation of the Cross	15 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 6pm Parish Council	16	17 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
18 9:15 Church school 9:40am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30pm Bible Class	19	20	21 6pm Daily Vespers	22 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	23	24 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
25 9:15 Church school 9:40am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30pm Bible Class	26	27	28 6pm Akathist to St. John the Forerunner	29 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	30	

September 2016

Tentative October 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
2 9:15 Church school 9:40am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30pm Bible Class	3	4 6:30pm Book Club	5 6pm Vigil for St. Innocent	6 9am Divine Liturgy for St. Innocent 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	7	8 10am Church Cleanup 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
9 9:15 Church school 9:40am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30pm Bible Class	10 Columbus Day	11	12 6pm Akathist	13 8am MCMA 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	14 Kingdom Builders 8-4pm	15 Kingdom Builders 8-4pm 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
16 9:15 Church school 9:40am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30pm Bible Class	17	18	19 6pm Akathist	20 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	21 Greek Fest	22 Greek Fest 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
23 9:15 Church school 9:40am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	24	25	26 6pm Akathist	27 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	28	29 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
30 9:15 Church school 9:40am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	31					