

February 2017



SAINT INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH

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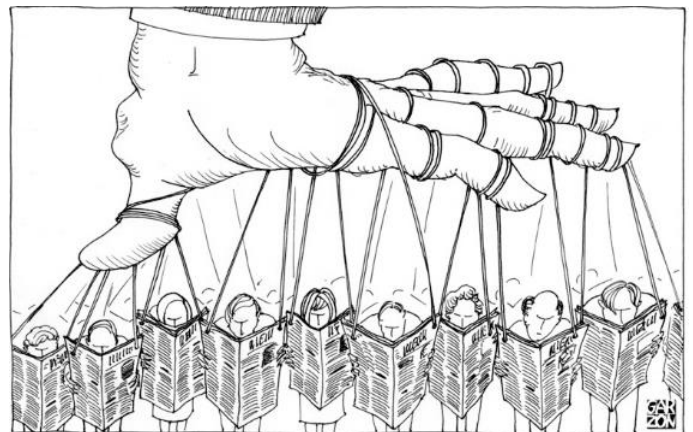
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February 2017 Newsletter

Control and resistance...

Control, no matter which direction it is pushing or pulling, by nature breeds resistance. There are many ways to control people. One popular method is to dominate others into submission with claims of authority or with actual power. The reverse of this would be manipulating people with our needs and weakness. To control others one can manipulate circumstances so that things go in a desired direction. The counterpart of this is to manipulate through neglect and passivity. One can even simply create chaos by deliberately antagonizing people in order to push their buttons and keep them off balance. Every culture uses shame, guilt, and/or the promise of reward to motivate its people into some sort of conformity. All media by its very nature is ideological and meant to persuade us accept its values and positions. On a personal level, each one of us can be controlling in the right circumstances.

I am thinking about these sort of things because of the political discussions going on in our nation. I constantly feel pushed and pulled in different ideological directions by friends within social networks, and the news media. At



times it feels that I am supposed to care about every problem and chase every ambulance to prove that I am a good Christian. It is as if I should dedicate myself to every social justice cause and be advocate for any and all types of victimhood. Most importantly, I am being called to action. If I do not "do" something I am part of the problem. The constant high-pitched "crisis" is disorienting. At every turn my experience of reality and my personal beliefs are being challenged. I am being asked to accept things that I do not believe are healthy. What is one to do in such high-pitched, polemic times?

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Our Lord Jesus Christ was also surrounded by competing ideals and agendas. Jesus had to contend with the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the scribes, the gentiles, the zealots, the poor, the rich, and even His disciples. Each group had their expectations of who Christ should be and what He should do. The scandal of the Cross is that Jesus did not fit into people preconceived notions of the coming messiah. Before His resurrection from the dead, outside of being a magical healer and His impractical teachings, Jesus was a rather disappointing personality. For the Sadducees, Pharisees and scribes He was a heretic. The zealots and general population wanted a political messiah. He was even disappointing to His closest followers.



Our faith teaches us that Jesus lived and acted exactly as He was commanded to. Our Lord said, "I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak" (John 12:49). He tells His disciples "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34). Jesus's agenda was to work in unison with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The ramifications of this was that Jesus was not pushed around by guilt, shame, or the promise of reward. The dominance of the authorities did not challenge Christ's integrity. He was not manipulated by high-pitched crises that surround Him. In some places, even though there was a clear need, Jesus did not heal even though He could have. He did not raise all of the dead. Even Jesus's unpleasant demise was something He did voluntarily. Pilate must have been surprised to hear Christ's retort to his question, "Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" Jesus answered, "You could have no

power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above" (John 19:10-11).

I believe that as Christians we should not be controlled by our surrounding society. That doesn't mean we should ignore the problems of our day or disengage from civilization. Christianity is not escapism. What I do mean is that everything we do and say should be grounded in obedience to Christ. Instead of reacting we should seek to only act in obedience. Like Christ, our words and actions should be tied to God's will for our own lives rather than the incessant demands of our society. It is true that we are all called to love our enemies and fulfill the general New and Old Testament commandments.

Beyond the general commandments we are called to seek the will of God in each and every situation. Just because there is a need does not mean we are called to fill it. Not every Christian is called run a homeless shelter (one example) or be an advocate for a particular oppressed (one example). Some are called to homeless ministry, and if they are called, their walk with God is tied directly to their obedience to God's call.

Pushing and pulling is the way the world works; there is no way to avoid it. Control, no matter which direction it is pushing or pulling, by nature breeds resistance. If we must resist, let us resist by prayerfully searching for God's will in our lives. It is only in seeking to have Christ as the "backbone" of all that we do and say that we will be able walk upon the waves of the stormy seas of our times. In the end, the only good works that will stand are those that were built upon the rock of Christ. May Christ bless us to clearly discern His will and give us the grace to be obedient to His calling.

In Christ,

Fr. Theophan

February 2017

Announcements

- The Parish Council is scheduled to meet on Thursday, February 9th at 7pm.
- Fr. Theophan will be out of town for the DOS pastoral conference the 13-16th.
- Sunday, February 19th will be our last day of meat until Pascha.
- We will be serving the Paraklesis on Friday, February 24th. Please submit any names of people whom you would like us to pray for.
- The Great Fast begins on Monday the 27th. We will have services every night at 6:30pm for the first week of Lent.
- Confessions are heard *every Saturday after Great Vespers* or before Sunday Liturgy between 9:15- 9:40am. There is no need to schedule an appointment unless it is outside of the above times.

A few Lenten events at Holy Cross Orthodox Church

Fr. Anthony Salzman will make a presentation on the "Lenten Prayer of St. Ephraim" at Holy Cross on Saturday, March 4th from 10am to 3pm. The people of St. Innocent are invited. Please let Fr. Theophan know if you plan on attending. A luncheon is included. Afterwards, we'll have confessions.

Also, Fr. John Stefero is offering a workshop on 2 Saturdays in March, the 11th and 18th, on "Using One's Gifts for the Glory of God." This is based on our personalities and each participant will be required to fill out a short questionnaire to assess their gifts.

Lenten Retreat save the Date

On Saturday, April 1st at 10am we are scheduled to have our annual Lenten Retreat. This year we the retreat master will be Fr. Herman Majkrzak, a priest-monk from St. Tikhon's Monastery. More information will be published in the March Newsletter.



Instant Church Directory

We are now using instantchurchdirectory.com to put out our new parish directory. Please take the time to send Fr. Theophan the picture you would like displayed for you or your family. As soon as I have enough pictures and the info is corrected I will print the directory for those who do not use the internet.

Here is what you need to know to access the directory: You can view the directory from your iPhone, iPad, Android or Kindle Fire by downloading the free Members App. Search for "Instant Church Directory" in the Apple App Store, Google Play, or Amazon App store or you can follow this link this link: <https://www.instantchurchdirectory.com/app>. After you download the app they will ask you to sign in using your email and creating your own password. This is an in-house directory which mean only those who Fr. Theophan gives access can use the directory.

Many Years!

Birthdays

2-- Loukas Wilcox

12--Gary Cox

19--Sondra Franceil

Anniversaries

9-- Eric and Lee Olson

10--Jerome and Diana Gratigny

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6pm Great Vespers w/Litya for the Meeting	2 9am Divine Liturgy for the Meeting of Christ in the Temple 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State	3	4 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
5 Publican and Pharisee 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	6 <i>Fr. Theophan's day off</i>	7 7pm Bolingbroke Community Club	8 No Fast 6pm Daily Vespers	9 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	10 No Fast	11 8-4pm Fr. Theophan @ McRae Mission 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm
12 Prodigal Son 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	13 <i>Fr. Theophan's day off</i>	14 Fr. Theophan @ DOS Pastoral Conference in TX 7pm Bolingbroke Community Club	15 Fr. Theophan @ DOS Pastoral Conference in TX 6pm Readers Vespers	16 Fr. Theophan @ DOS Pastoral Conference in TX	17	18 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
19 Last Judgment 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	20 Meat Fast <i>Fr. Theophan's day off</i>	21 Meat Fast	22 Meat Fast 6pm Daily Vespers	23 Meat Fast 9-1pm CPE 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	24 Meat Fast 6pm Paraklesis (Prayer Group)	25 Meat Fast 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
26 Forgiveness Sunday 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy Followed by Forgiveness Vespers 12:45pm Agape	27 Great Lent Begins 6:30pm Compline with the Great Canon	28 6:30pm Compline with the Great Canon				

Tentative March 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	2 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 6:30pm Compline with the Great Canon	3 6:30pm Molebin to St. Theodore	4 10-3pm Holy Cross Lenten Retreat 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
5 Sunday of Orthodoxy 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy With Icon Procession 11:45am Agape 12:30 Lenten Class	6 <i>Fr. Theophan's day off</i>	7 7pm Bolingbroke Community Club	8 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	9 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	10	11 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
12 St. Gregory Palamas 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30 Lenten Class	13 <i>Fr. Theophan's day off</i>	14	15 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	16 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 7pm Parish Council	17	18 6pm Vigil for the Feast of the Cross
19 Precious Cross 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30 Lenten Class	20 <i>Fr. Theophan's day off</i>	21	22 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	23 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	24 6:30pm Great Vespers for Annunciation	25 9am Annunciation Divine Liturgy 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
26 St. John Climacus 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape 12:30 Lenten Class	27 <i>Fr. Theophan's day off</i>	28	29 6:30pm Matins with the Great Canon of St. Andrew	30 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	31 6:30pm Matins with Akathist to the Theotokos	

Tentative April 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 10-2pm Lenten Retreat 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
2 St. Mary of Egypt 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	3	4 7pm Bolingbroke Community Club	5 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	6	7 6:30pm Matins for Lazarus Saturday	8 10am Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday 6pm Vigil for Palm Sunday
9 Palm Sunday 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	10 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins	11 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins	12 6:30pm The Sacrament of Holy Unction	13 10am Vesperal Divine Liturgy 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 6:30pm Matins with the	14 10am Royal Hours 3pm Vespers w/ the placing of the Shroud. 4:30 decor the tomb 6:30pm Matins w/ the Lamentations	15 10am Vesperal Divine Liturgy 11:30pm Midnight Office, Paschal Matins & Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
16 Great and Holy Pascha 1pm Agape Vespers	17	18	19 No Fast 6pm Paschal Vespers	20 7pm Parish Council	21 No Fast	22 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
23 St. Thomas Sunday 9:40 Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Radonitza Panikhida 12:45 Agape	24	25	26 6pm Daily Vespers	27	28 6pm Paraklesis (Prayer Group)	29 6pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Confessions
30 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape Parish Update						