
SAINT INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH

MAY NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR



"Offering unto Thee, Thine own of Thine Own"

There are multitudes of different types of Christian churches throughout Monroe County. Most of the congregations have ministries which seek to help our surrounding society in some way. Some communities focus on serving, clothing, sheltering or feeding the poor. Other churches minister in prisons or work with inner-city youth. Most communities equip their congregations to be good earthly and Heavenly citizens. In general, Christians have always been a force for good in society.

In noting all of the good things that Christian churches do in our area and around the country, one could generalize that Christianity itself is about doing good things. It may be hard to believe, but the truth is that the Christian faith is not specifically about doing good works. It is true that followers of Christ will do good works as the natural fruit of the living

Christian faith. However, the goal of following Christ is not doing good works.

There is a pressure in modern Christianity to justify our existence by creating "helpful" ministries. Many well-intentioned ministries are completely founded on the egos of a few persons or on a few people who are driven by their incessant need to feel helpful. When I have declined to give certain persons in need charity I have more than been accused of not being a good Christian. A prison chaplain once told me many church group volunteers were motivated to preach in prison because it improved their website or resume and guaranteed a "captive audience."

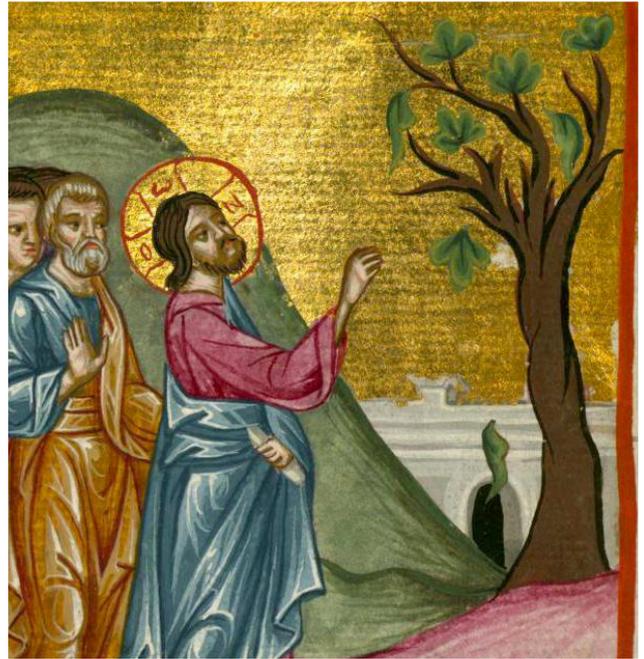
Jesus is always our example of how the Christian faith should be lived. Jesus was surrounded by a sea of human need and he healed many, he cast out many demons and worked on the hearts of the Jewish

authorities. In the synagogue, Jesus described His ministry using Isaiah's words that the Spirit anointed Him to "preach the gospel to the poor...to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The works and wonders that Jesus did were the evidence of His Messiahship. "The same works that I do, bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me." (John 5:36)

However, there were a lot of works and wonders that Jesus did not do. He did not heal everyone, he did not raise all the dead, he did not cure world poverty, he did not liberate the Israelites from Roman dominance, and he did not cast out all demons. Our Lord could have cured these besetting problems quickly and easily, but He didn't.

What was Jesus's motivation for helping some and not others? In John 5:19 He tells us, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner." In John 12:49 He states, "For 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." Jesus's primary motivation for healing, teaching, working miracles, and rebuking the religious authorities of His time, was always obedience to His Heavenly Father.

Obedience to the direction of the Holy Spirit is what is what is supposed to motivate us as we minister to our area. Everything we do, if it is to be successful, must have God's blessing. It has been mentioned many times over the years that we, as a parish, do not exist for ourselves alone. Our vision is to bring the Orthodox Gospel to our area in its language and culture. Ultimately, Orthodox Christians are called to preach the Gospel with and without words by serving others, both those in our church community and those outside of it.



In our short history St. Innocent Church has been blessed by God. We worship in a beautiful temple which we officially paid off this April. We have beautiful icons, furnishing and the services are beautiful. We are blessed now with adequate facilities for fellowship and even while we were in transition our community has grown in numbers. God has been incredibly gracious to St. Innocent Church.

What shall we render to the Lord for all of His bounties towards us? The question is not meant to be answered in a newsletter reflection. Corporately and individually we need to begin to seek God's direction for our community. What is it that you and I are called to be doing with what God has given us? What are the gifts and talents that God has given us and where does He want us to multiply them? What are the "holes" in our parish ministry to each other and the world that are waiting for people to fill them?

There is no rush to be doing anything as long as we are each seeking the God's direction and responding in obedience. It may take years for a ministry to organically develop. We truly follow Christ when we prayerfully look to God to guide us in every word and deed. God has blessed us, may He continue to do so!

NEWS & UPDATES

- Congratulations to Aidan H and Nick D on their High School Graduation!
- The new audio system for the parish hall was recently installed. You can now hear the Liturgy in the parish hall!
- The parish council decided to hire professional cleaners to come and clean our new parish hall once a month. We still need to clean weekly but now we are guaranteed a deep clean once a month.
- The parish council has decided to switch our light system in the church to LEDs. This should help with our electric bill as well as fix the hot dimmer switches that are below the HVAC thermometer.
- Our irrigation was installed and we expect that the sod and grass surrounding the parish hall will be completed this month.
- The land for our cemetery has been cleared and will be seeded with grass this month.
- The Cemetery Committee has been working diligently. At some point we will be having a parish meeting to discuss the proposed Rules and Regulations for our cemetery.
- Fr. Theophan has asked Julia to help gather information for people's Realm Profiles.
- See Calendar below for the schedule of services and happenings at St. Innocent Church. You can also find this calendar by signing into Realm, on our Google calendar, and our website.

MANY YEARS!

Birthdays

- 2 Oliver Hough
- 2 Quintin Curington
- 10 Lee Olson
- 11 Igor Osobov/Tsarkovska
- 13 Olha Osobov/Tsarkovska
- 15 Matthew Marble
- 16 Meg Croft
- 28 Mose Williams

Anniversaries

- 2 Paul & Kimberly Guest
- 17 Radu & Daniela Galdau
Malcoci/Galdau
- 24 Jacqueline & John Stephens
- 26 Michael & Benita Muth



PARISH NEEDS

We are always looking for people to use their talents to serve in our community.

Here are a few needs we have:

- The potluck food at coffee hours has been rather thin for a while now. Some Sunday's there is almost nothing to eat. Some people/families bring food regularly. Thank you! The goal of coffee hour/hospitality hour is to give people an opportunity to fellowship as well as to show hospitality for guests. If you eat regularly at coffee hours please consider bringing food once or twice a month.
- We also accept donations for the paper supplies we use during coffee hour.
- If you stay for food and fellowship on Sunday's please help clean up after coffee hour. Many hands make lite work. Thank you for all those who regularly say to clean up on Sunday's.
- There are some items outdoors that need to be brought into the parish hall storage. Talk to Fr. Theophan.
- We are putting together a list of furniture needs for our parish hall and we are accepting donations for this cause.

What about ministry ideas?

- Organizing meals for those in need.
- Visiting those who cannot make it to church.
- Helping our elder people of the parish.

Please take the time to consider what ways you can help our parish. Thank you to all those who serve already. Your sacrifice makes a big difference our small community.



We now can accept donations through Realm. This can be done as a guest or through your own personal profile. Once you have claimed your profile you can sign in and donate.

When you donate through Realm, your payment information (credit card number or bank account number) remains private (between you and Realm) and is not viewed by anyone in the parish. You can make your payment recurring and easily cancel at any time. The giving link in Realm gives you the option to choose which fund you would like to donate to.

In Realm you can:

- Donate by Automatic Bank Withdrawal - This carries the lowest fee for the parish, less than 1%
- Donate by Debit or Credit Card This comes with a standard fee for the parish of 2.6%
- Donate by Text message - Text siocmacon (\$amount) to 73256 to give to Tithes & Offerings using your text messaging.
- If you have claimed your profile you can easily see a record of your charitable donations to St. Innocent Church.



Consider supporting St. Innocent through Amazon Smile.

Go to smile.amazon.com/ch/58-2418134 and Amazon donates to a percentage of what you buy to St. Innocent Orthodox Christian Church.



CHARITY OF THE MONTH

Baby Bottle Boomerang fundraiser for Monroe County Pregnancy Center. We will pass out baby bottles on Mother's day and get them back on Father's day. Also, we can accept donations through Realm.

For more information about the Pregnancy Center please visit their website @ monroecountypregnancycenter.org/



Consider supporting St. Innocent through Kroger community rewards. If you have a Kroger card, you can update your Kroger Community Rewards online. Our organization number is (49127) or you can search for Innocent and select our church.

Guidelines for parents with young children in the parish.

I am not sure where I (Fr Theophan) found this article, who wrote it, or what church it comes from. It is longer than most etiquettes but I like it because it strikes the proper tone and puts church etiquette in a theological perspective. I encourage everyone to read it because many of the guidelines apply to adults as well. If you have any questions feel free to ask me questions.

Introduction

Salvation is found in our neighbor. Everyone whom our Lord sends to us each day is not only for their salvation, but perhaps even more so for ours. Our Lord's words are very clear: if we love those who love us, what credit is that to us? If we lend to those who will pay back, what credit is that to us? Rather, he exhorts us to love and do good to those who cause us trouble—I'd include those who frustrate or distract us. And I would go so far as to say that whatever may distract us, before we seek to correct it by whatever manner, first we ought to take it as a measure of our own lack of inner stillness and love for God, and ask the Lord to help us repent.

Our ascetical efforts during church include not only long periods of standing, many prayers, signs of the cross, and sometimes prostrations, but also loving our Christian brother and sister nearby us. When distracted by him or her—child or adult—let us first put on love, patience, kindness, gentleness, perseverance. After all, according to our Lord, the Judgment we give is the judgment we shall receive. If we are cruel or harsh, we shall receive the same judgment, according to the Gospel. If we show mercy, mercy will be shown to us. And let us also remember, according to the Desert Fathers, that it is possible to be totally at peace on the outside (facial expressions, etc), while completely devouring our neighbor in our heart. This is spiritually very dangerous.

At the same time, we are bound by our voluntary existence as slaves to Jesus Christ not to put any stumbling block in the way of our brother or sister. "Stumbling block" in the New Testament is one word,

"skandalon", from which we derive "scandal". Therefore, putting others before ourselves, we must also consider what is 'decent and in order', to follow St Paul's teaching, so that our services are peaceful. We need to keep unnecessary movements and noise to an absolute minimum, in order that all may pray in peace and hear the prayers, readings, hymns, homily, etc., during our common prayer.

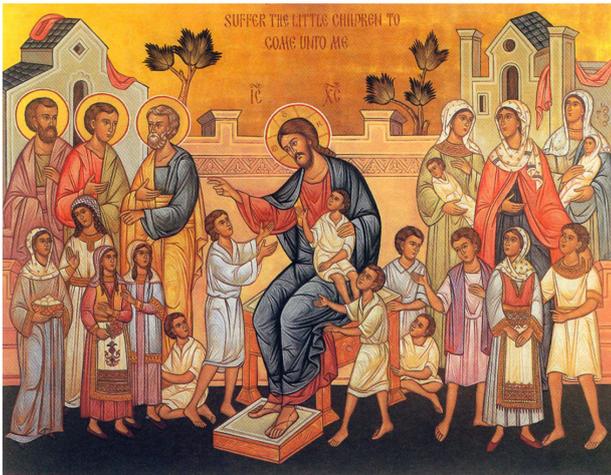
Parenting is an ascetical discipline and stewardship from the Lord. Our children are not ours, but entrusted to us by God himself, to be nurtured and raised in the faith. Our care for our children, including the need to absent ourselves for some or part of some services, is an offering to God for the upbringing of the children within a community.

We rejoice that our parish is growing with an increasing number of children—it is what we pray for fervently at every wedding celebration. In addition to adults who convert to the faith, our children are also, the coming generation of Orthodox Christians called to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

With our Lord Jesus Christ, we say, "Let the little children come to me" (Matthew 19:14a). For this reason, we do not traditionally have nurseries at church—children are "full members" of the church, at least in the sense that they are invited to Church as we all are, and take part in the Eucharist from their baptism, like the rest of us. For this reason traditionally, we do not have church school overlapping the Divine Liturgy in any way. Children are aware of the presence of God often more than we are, and are certainly sponges in Church, where we have grown hard-hearted. "For to such belong the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 19:14b).

The challenge is that we also strive to honor St Paul's teaching to the Corinthians, "All things should be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40). While he was addressing specifically concerns of prophesying and speaking in tongues, St Paul's exhortation has been taken in the Church for centuries to be a

Guidelines for parents with young children in the parish continued..



baseline for piety and behavior during Divine Services.

Teaching our children the simple ascetical disciplines of church attendance will pay dividends at home. Here they can learn at the earliest age that not all time is play time. There are special times of quiet and stillness which can carry over to our homes and schools. For the sake of teaching ourselves and our children stillness (inner and outer) as well as for the orderliness of Divine Services and concern for others, the following should be observed by all members of the parish (this is not written "only" for parents):

Arriving Late

If you have arrived late to the Divine Liturgy, please do not enter the church during the reading of the Epistle, the reading of the Gospel, or during the Homily. Please wait patiently in the narthex for an appropriate moment to find your place in the church.

A Parent's First Vocation at Church

While it is a venerable practice in Orthodoxy for us to care for one another's children, a parent's first vocation in the parish setting is parent. Serving in the Altar, Reading, Singing, and other duties/ministries in the Church come second to being a parent. When a child grows restless or too noisy to be in church at a given time, the parent(s) should see that the child is tended to as soon as possible (removal to the narthex or outside for some momentary fresh air). Parenting is a mutual effort, which falls to both parents: mother and father. For the

sake of the sanity of both parents, it might very well be helpful or necessary for the parents to take a tag-team approach, where one parent participates actively at one service, and the other at another, so that one parent can be devoted to the care of the child at all times. It may be self-evident, but the division of this labor of love should be understood between the two parents before coming to church, so that the child is not left restless while two parents eye one another to indicate "it is your turn." For that matter, it may be helpful to remember that, according to the Gospel, parents ought even to outdo one another in offering to care for the children.

Entering the Church

Small children should be led by the hand through the nave to venerate the icons if they are still too young to walk freely in a quiet, reverent manner. Running and skipping are not appropriate in the nave.

Leaving the Church

Please do not allow small children to leave the church unattended or in groups only of themselves. For safety's sake, among others, small children should always be accompanied by an adult if one needs to leave for any reason.

Crossing the Nave

There is generally speaking no need for anyone in the parish to wander back and forth across the nave during services, and this is also true for children. It is not necessary, nor is it appropriate for children to wander freely, unattended or not, around or across the nave. Is it certainly okay, however, for parents to carry or walk children around to the various icons and or relics in the church to offer the child a moment of "holy" distraction.

During the Entrances and Censings

During the entrances (Little and Great Entrance at the Divine Liturgy, and Vespers Entrance at Gladsome Light) as well as during the various censings of the church (beginning of Great Vespers, Lord I call, and the full censuring of the church prior to the Divine Liturgy), children should be monitored carefully and kept

Guidelines for parents with young children in the parish continued...

close so as not to interrupt the procession or censings. Small children should be picked up from the floor. Everyone should stop and make way for the procession. A good rule of thumb is, "any time the clergy come out from the altar area" stop what you are doing, move out of the way and pay attention. If you are reverencing the icons upon your entrance into the church when the priest or deacon comes out, stop your reverence, pick up the child, and move to the side so the clergy can pass. Remain standing reverently where you are until the clergy return into the sanctuary (altar area). Then you may complete your veneration and take your place.

Epistle, Gospel, Homily

Parents of small children should take into account the possibility of the natural noisy-ness of their children, especially during the reading of the Epistle and Gospel, as well as during the homily. Consider a position at or near the narthex or an exit door, in order to take a talkative or restless little-one out, so that those gathered may hear and understand the readings and homily. Please keep in mind that the narthex still directly connects to the nave, and sound carries well from one space to another. If, after moving to the narthex, a child continues to be boisterous, please step outside with him or her for a few minutes.

Standing in Church

The normal posture of prayer in the Divine Liturgy is standing—if we stand in the presence of earthly kings and heads of state, all the moreso ought we to stand in the presence of the King of Glory. All of us need training and practice to stand for our typically-long services, and those who need to sit should certainly sit without a second thought. Whereas it is acceptable to sit for the Epistle reading, and for any Old Testament readings (at Vespers and on Holy Saturday for example), apart from debilitating illness, we ought to stand for the reading of the Gospel, as well as for the anaphora ("let us lift up our hearts" and to communion). Children



Children should be taught to stand and to face the altar and/or the Gospel and to pay attention at these times.

Talking during communion and prayers of thanksgiving

It is not appropriate for anyone to have conversation during communion, either before or after receiving the Eucharist. While it is a hospitable act to offer friends and visitors a piece of antidoron at this time, it is not the occasion for visiting or catching up with one another. While waiting to receive communion, we ought to be in a state of prayerful preparation, after receiving, in a state of prayerful gratitude, and if not receiving, repenting and praying quietly—or else singing along with the communion hymn. It is likewise inappropriate to begin to chat during the prayers of thanksgiving. The service is full over and done when the last 'amen' is sung and the bells begin to ring. Remember the Gospel story of the healing of the 10 Lepers (Luke 17:11ff).

Keeping the Children Close

It is most appropriate that parents should consider a reasonable boundary around themselves outside of which the children should not stray (about an arm's length is best). While we do indeed want to encourage children to be "at home" in the church, the church is not a living room, it

Guidelines for parents with young children in the parish.

is not a playground, and it is not the kitchen. And it is also not helpful for infants and toddlers to be near one another, as they confuse this with a play setting. Please do not encourage such behavior; and while babies giggles and coos are cute, do not encourage such during the service.

Sacred Space

The nave is a sacred space; it is different from the den, and must be treated as such. Just as a noisy child would be taken out of a Library for the sake of peace and quiet, and out of deference for the wider gathered community, so too in the church during services. Our church building is also rather unique among contemporary buildings, since it is built, in part, for its acoustics. Crying and the clop-clopping of new walkers are amplified here in ways that they are not elsewhere. Please take this into account and be courteous.

Discussions in Church

It can be helpful for parents/other adults occasionally to whisper explanations to children of happenings within the service (explaining that a baptism is about to occur, or directing the young one's attention to the Great Entrance, for example). However, conversation should be kept to a minimum, saving detailed discussions for time outside of the services. Additionally, children need to be encouraged to attend to the services as they are able, and discouraged from engaging in side conversations with one another. Encourage them to say the prayers along with the rest of the congregation and to sing the responses as appropriate along with the choir.

Toys and Books

No toys should be brought into the nave—especially noisy ones, and especially not to set up a play room. The littlest ones may be comforted by a stuffed animal—but dolls, rattles, cars, etc. are not appropriate. Children—even the smallest ones—are

capable of being directed to pay attention and to focus on our prayers. Prayer books and picture books of icons, church items and lives of the saints are appropriate and educational for use during the services.

Food and Drink

No food or drink should be brought into the church. While mothers may certainly nurse discreetly in the back of the nave, bags of cheerios, sippy cups, etc. are best saved for the parish hall.

A Final Word

These standards are given in an effort to balance our Orthodox understanding of the right raising of children in the Church. We welcome children to the Divine Services, that they may pray with us and grow in their knowledge and love of God. Still, as we grow in numbers, and especially as the Lord answers our fervent matrimonial prayers for “children like olive shoots” around our tables, we must take care not to overburden our children with more church than they can handle, nor to tax the boundaries of charity when children grow too noisy or restless to stay in the services.

Again, let us support one and encourage one another, that we might all complete the remaining time of our lives in peace and repentance, serving one another in the love of Christ.
Written in 2009, unknown author

A final note from Fr. Theophan

I hope these guidelines are helpful and received in the right spirit. We recently installed an audio system in the parish hall so that anyone who might have to step out for the occasional child melt down has a place where they can still hear the service. May God continue to fill our church with children.

May 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9am Morning Prayers	2 6pm Daily Vespers	3 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	4	5 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
6 Samaritan Woman 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	7	8 9am Morning Prayers	9 6pm Daily Vespers	10 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 7pm Parish Council	11	12 10am Church Cleanup 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
13 Blind Man 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	14	15 9am Morning Prayers	16 6pm Festal Great Vespers for Ascension	17 9am Divine Liturgy for Ascension 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 7pm Parish Council	18	19 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
20 Fr's of 1 st Council 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	21	22 9am Morning Prayers	23 6pm Daily Vespers	24 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	25	26 6pm Vigil for Pentecost
27 Pentecost 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Festal Divine Liturgy for Pentecost 11:45am Agape	28 Memorial Day	29 9am Morning Prayers	30 No Fast 6pm Daily Vespers	31 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry		

Tentative June 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 No Fast	2 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
3 All Saints 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	4 The Apostles Fast Begins	5 9am Morning Prayers	6 6pm Daily Vespers	7 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	8	9 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
10 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	11	12 9am Morning Prayers	13 6pm Daily Vespers	14 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	15	16 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
17 Father's Day	18	19 9am Morning Prayers	20 6pm Daily Vespers	21 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	22	23 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
24 9:40am 3 & 6 th Hours 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape Guest Priest Fr. Seraphim Ioa	25 Fr. Theophan Vacation	26	27 6pm Readers Vespers	28	29 The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul	30 6pm Great Vespers