**"Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Psalm 90:12**

The first long-term Orthodox Christian missionary priest from America to East Africa was sent by Archbishop Iakovos in the mid-1980s. As he gradually assimilated into the local culture, he found the local concept of time to be a most difficult adjustment, and upon his return to America, liked to quote the Kenyans who loved to tell him, "White men have watches. We have time." Our brief time on earth is God's gift. As faithful Christians, we are accountable for our stewardship of this precious gift. The American scientist Thomas Edison said, "Time is not a commodity that can be stored for future use. It must be invested hour by hour or else it is gone forever."

"Man is like a breath; his days are like a fleeting shadow." Psalm 144:4

Our lifetime is a small bit of eternity – "...a fleeting shadow..." (Psalm 144) which we receive as stewards. Time is a precious gift that we dare not waste. Like the three stewards in the Parable of the Talents, one day God will call each one of us to give account of how we have used the time entrusted to us.

"...a time for every purpose under heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1

There is "a time for every purpose," as the verse from Ecclesiastes instructs us: "...a time to plant, a time to reap..." the challenge is to appropriately allocate our time to the various purposes that make claims on it. The passage teaches us to make the most of God's great gift of time.

The Gift of Time

"The greatest gift I ever received," said a young attorney, "was a gift I got one Christmas from my dad. He gave me a small box with a note inside that said, "Son, this year I will give you 365 hours, one hour every day after dinner. We'll talk about what you want to talk about, go where you want to go, play what you want to play." The young attorney continued, "My dad not only kept the promise of his gift, but he renewed it every year – and it's the greatest gift I ever had in my life. I am the result of his time." The most personal, most appreciated and most unique gift that you can give is the gift of time – Your time. That valuable 24 hours a day that only you can spend. Depending on your profession, your time may be worth hundreds of dollars an hour. But the time you give to another person and the Church is priceless. Our children need our time, helping shape their lives by word and by example. The time we give to our children is an investment in their lives that is not wasted.

Spending Time with God

As Christians it is also important to value the time we spend at church, in worship, service and activities. Every member of the Body of Christ plays a role, according to their gifts, in the life of the local church. The church is not a social club, but rather a place where people of faith gather for worship, fellowship and service. Most importantly, we gather together in worship, praising and thanking God for the blessings in our lives and hearing His Word. Of the 168 hours in every week with which we have been blessed, we offer back the short time we spend in church on Sunday morning, gathered together as the Body of Christ. We are united in prayer and united in Holy Communion. We become his hands and feet carrying out His work in the world. As we offer ourselves and our time as His Church, we are part of something much bigger than we can imagine – much bigger than the project we support, the service we provide, the prayer we offer.

The Great Feast (Luke 14)

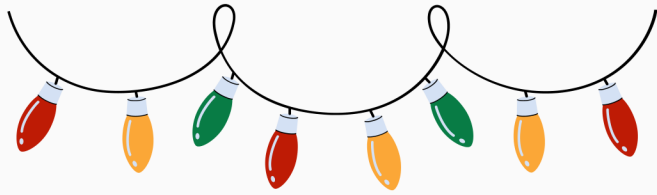
In the Gospel of Luke we read of the man who planned a great feast and invited many people. When it was time to serve the dinner, they were all too busy – one with his farm, one with his bride, another with his oxen. We can become so busy making a living that we forget to make life. God gets crowded out of our lives over the most unimportant things. At the first Christmas when Jesus was born, there was no room at the inn. And today we still have no room for Jesus. We crowd Him out with so many things. In The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis shows how the devil captures us, not by preventing encounters with God, but by whispering in our ear that we are "just too busy right now. We'll get to that soon. But just not right now."

Resetting Our Priorities

Just as we budget our financial resources to reflect our priorities, we can re-set our allocation of time. We are all busy, but not all of that busy time is well-spent. We may need to say no to certain demands on our time, opening our schedule to God's prompting. We can live each day anticipating the opportunities he places in our path to offer our gift of time.

Stewardship of Time: <https://www.goarch.org/-/stewardship-of-time>

MANY YEARS!



Ladies Christmas Fellowship

December 1, 6:30 PM

Parish Hall

Join the SIOC ladies for an evening of sweet treats, ornament decorating, cocoa, cider, and fellowship!

Bring your favorite Nativity Fast Dessert or Small Dish, plus a print-out of your recipe to share! All girls and ladies are welcome--bring a friend!



Birthdays
1 Fr. Theophan Buck
4 Christopher Mareska
4 Aidan Magnusson
5 Kimberly Guest
7 Jacob Turner
7 Elora Hitt
14 Elena Hintermaier
20 Caterina Plummer
23 Mariana Turner
23 Vera Tompkins
24 Jackson Pelt
30 Elliana Andrews



LADIES BOOK CLUB

NOVEMBER 6

7 PM

@THE PARISH HALL

Nativity Charity International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)

"At IOCC, we pray for peace in the Holy Land and for the countless families affected by the hostilities there. We are in touch with our Church partner, and they report that displaced families are seeking and finding refuge in churches. IOCC has already provided food and water, hygiene items, and mattresses for hundreds of displaced people in Gaza. As we monitor the situation and our team in the Holy Land works with our US-based team and the Church to determine the most urgent needs, and how we can best assist, you can help. A gift today to IOCC's International Emergency Response Fund will allow IOCC to quickly and effectively get critical care to people in need."



Parish Life Continued



Love Took Flesh: Nativity Letters by Matthew the Poor
(order online)

Today, after the sterility of spirit that had befallen our two ancestors, humanity has become fertile.

Today has been born to man a Son who is called an everlasting God. Today, we celebrate the birth of the first-fruit of humanity, the first-born among many brethren, the head of the spiritual Church that fills Heaven. He is the sole Mediator between us and the Father, for He is our brother and the Son of God at one and the same time. Love took flesh, sacrifice became a body. When the Father's love for sinners united with the Son's love for the Father, Christ was born.



MEN'S RETREAT ON SATURDAY, NOV. 11TH FROM 11-4PM
WE WILL HAVE OUR ANNUAL MEN'S FELLOWSHIP RETREAT AT
DOROGY FARM. WE WILL BE SENDING OUT AN EMAIL WITH
ALL THE DETAILS IN EARLY NOVEMBER. PLEASE RSVP ON REALM.

UPCOMING! NATIVITY FAST, NOV 15-DEC 25

Fasting – Prayers by the Lake – XLI
By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

With fasting I gladden my hope in You, my Lord, Who are to come again. Fasting hastens my preparation for Your coming, the sole expectation of my days and nights. Fasting makes my body thinner, so that what remains can more easily shine with the spirit. While waiting for You, I wish neither to nourish myself with blood nor to take life—so that the animals may sense the joy of my expectation. But truly, abstaining from food will not save me. Even if I were to eat only the sand from the lake, You would not come to me, unless the fasting penetrated deeper into my soul. I have come to know through my prayer, that bodily fasting is more a symbol of true fasting, very beneficial for someone who has only just begun to hope in You, and nevertheless very difficult for someone who merely practices it. Therefore I have brought fasting into my soul to purge her of many impudent fiancé's and to prepare her for You like a virgin. And I have brought fasting into my mind, to expel from it all daydreams about worldly matters and to demolish all the air castles, fabricated from those daydreams. I have brought fasting into my mind, so that it might jettison the world and prepare to receive Your Wisdom. And I have brought fasting into my heart, so that by means of it my heart might quell all passions and worldly selfishness. I have brought fasting into my heart, so that heavenly peace might ineffably reign over my heart, when Your stormy Spirit encounters it. I prescribe fasting for my tongue, to break itself of the habit of idle chatter and to speak reservedly only those words that clear the way for You to come. And I have imposed fasting on my worries so that it may blow them all away before itself like the wind that blows away the mist, lest they stand like dense fog between me and You, and lest they turn my gaze back to the world. And fasting has brought into my soul tranquility in the face of uncreated and created realms, and humility towards men and creatures. And it has instilled in me courage, the likes of which I never knew when I was armed with every sort of worldly weapon. What was my hope before I began to fast except merely another story told by others, which passed from mouth to mouth? The story told by others about salvation through prayer and fasting became my own. False fasting accompanies false hope, just as no fasting accompanies hopelessness. But just as a wheel follows behind a wheel, so true fasting follows true hope. Help me to fast joyfully and to hope joyously, for You, my Most Joyful Feast, are drawing near to me with Your radiant smile.



ST. INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH
7301 Rivoli Road - Macon, Georgia 31210



NOVEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Oct 29 Church Musician Sunday 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Catechism	Oct 30	Oct 31	1 6:00pm Daily Vespers with Molebin for Peace	2 9:00am Divine Liturgy	3	4 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
5 Daylight Savings Clock Reset 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Catechism	6	7	8 <i>Synaxis of the Archangel Michael</i> 6:00pm Daily Vespers with Molebin for Peace	9 <i>Fr. Theophan @ Clergy Retreat</i>	10 <i>Fr. Theophan @ Clergy Retreat</i>	11 Men's Retreat 11-4pm 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
12 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:20pm Church School	13	14 <i>Fr. Theophan in Atlanta</i>	15 <i>Fr. Theophan in Atlanta</i> 6:00pm Readers Vespers	16 <i>Fr. Theophan in Atlanta</i> 6:00pm Spirituality 101 in WR	17	18 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
19 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Catechism	20 6:00pm Vigil for the Entrance of the Theotokos	21 <i>Entrance of the Theotokos</i> 9:00am Festal Divine Liturgy 7:00pm Zoom Book Study	22 6:00pm Akathist of Thanksgiving	23 Thanksgiving	24	25 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
26 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Catechism	27 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i>	28 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i>	29 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i> 6:00pm Readers Vespers	30 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i>	Dec 1 (Vladimir Grygorenko) 6:30pm Women's Fellowship Christmas Party	Dec 2 (Vladimir Grygorenko) 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession

Please consult the Sunday bulletin for changes to the monthly calendar.



ST. INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH
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DECEMBER 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov 26 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Catechism	Nov 27 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i>	Nov 28 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i>	Nov 29 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i> 6:00pm Readers Vespers	Nov 30 <i>Fr. Theophan in Colorado</i>	1 (Vladimir Grygorenko) 6:30pm Women's Fellowship Christmas Party	2 (Vladimir Grygorenko) 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
3 (Vladimir Grygorenko) 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	4	5 6:00pm Akathist to St. Nicholas 7:00pm Zoom Book Study	6 St. Nicholas 9:00am Divine Liturgy	7	8	9 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
10 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:20pm Church School	11	12 6:00pm Akathist to St. Herman of Alaska 7:00pm Zoom Book Study	13 St. Herman of Alaska 9:00am Divine Liturgy	14	15	16 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
17 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	18	19 (Tentative) 7:00pm Zoom Book Study	20 6:00pm Forefeast Matins	21 6:00pm Forefeast Matins	22 6:00pm Royal Hours of Nativity	23 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
24 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 6:00pm Nativity Vigil	25 NATIVITY OF THE LORD 10:00am Festal Liturgy for the Nativity of our Lord	26	27 No Fast 6:00pm Daily Vespers	28	29 No Fast	30 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
31 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	Jan 1 Circumcision of the Lord	Jan 2	Jan 3 No Fast 6:00pm Daily Vespers	Jan 4	Jan 5 6:00pm Vespers with the Great Blessing of the Waters	Jan 6 THEOPHANY OF THE LORD 10:00am Festal Divine Liturgy for Theophany 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession

Please consult the Sunday bulletin for changes to the monthly calendar.