



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

714 Westmoreland Avenue

PO Box 3

Slickville, PA 15684-0003

[724] 468-5581

www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org

Very Rev. Father Robert Popichak, Pastor

23 Station Street

Carnegie, PA 15106-3014

[412] 279-5640 home

[412] 956-6626 cell

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Theodosius [OCA], Archbishop Jovan, Bishop Robert, Father John Harvey, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Adam Yonitch, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Father Paisius McGrath, Joshua Agosto and his family, Eva Malesnick, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Linda Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—21-year-old with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Woloschak, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaele Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], Mel & Charlotte

Malik, David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Susan "Billie" Mason, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Donald Griffey, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [child with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Howard Simpson, Chris, Pastor Ed Bowen, David Hiles, Karen Johnson, Jennifer, Jerry Quinn, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Fred DeNorscia, Sandi Anderson, Donald Uebing, Sabrina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Barbara McDougall, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Virginia Catherine Pynch, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Kateryna Kocelko, Nancy Heinbaugh, Mira Filipovic, Lynn, Jacqueline, Irma Opacic, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Jeff Jones, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Donna Cacioppo [Evelyn's niece], Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Stella Rossi, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Manny "Lazarus" Lopez, Glenn & Lucas Burlack, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Evelyn Felouzis, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Millie Koss Good, Mary Haraczy, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Mike Mangan, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, and Jackie Crimbchin. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: February 28th—Obednitza downstairs and a short parish meeting; March 4th—cleaning party at the church—wear your work clothes!; March 6th—Coffee Hour compliments of Martha Persico!

Please remember in your prayers—our dear 'Little Father' Emilian, who returned to Romania to undergo surgery for back pain. This particular procedure is not offered here in the United States. He asked for our prayers and expressed his thanks for the love and fellowship he has shared with the Holy Ghost Parish Family. He said he looks forward to returning to us pain-free at some time in the future...may God watch over him and heal him...Fr. Bob

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: All Christians and the others in the Middle East who are suffering during this time of great

tragedy and unrest. May God watch over and keep them safe! Lord have mercy!

Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please ask Father Bob.

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28 OBEDNITZA DOWNSTAIRS IN THE CHURCH HALL 10:30 AM
SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON; APOSTLE ONESIMUS OF THE 70; VENERABLE PAPHNUTIUS-MONK & DAUGHTER SAINT EUPHROSYNE-NUN OF ALEXANDRIA;
VENERABLE EUSEBIUS-HERMIT OF SYRIA; VENERABLE PAPHNUTIUS-RECLUSE
OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

*****SPECIAL MEETING AFTER SERVICE TO TALK ABOUT BISHOP DANIEL'S
VISIT TOPICS*****

Tone 6

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Luke 15:11-32

FRIDAY, MARCH 04 PARISH WORKDAY—CLEANING & POLISHING 1:00 PM

**SUNDAY, MARCH 06 DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 10:30 AM
MEATFARE SUNDAY—SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT; HIEROMONK
POLYCARP-BISHOP OF SMYRNA; JAINTS JOHN, ANTIOCH, ANTONINUS, MOSES,
ZABINAS, POLYCHRONIUS, MOSES, & DAMIAN-AESCETICS OF THE SYRIAN
DESERT; SAINT ALEXANDER-FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF THE UNSLEEPING
ONES**

*****COFFEE HOUR COMPLIMENTS OF MARTHA PERSICO*****

Tone 7

1 Corinthians 8:6-9:2

Matthew 25:31-46

Litany in Blessed Memory of Mary Smith, John Metrick, Andrew Hanczar, Anna Lawrence, Michael Cicio, Chuck Shumski, Terry Reinhart, Joseph Vangrin, Frank Riznow, & Mike Holupka—Fr. Bob

SUNDAY, MARCH 13 DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 10:30 AM
CHEESEFARE SUNDAY—SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY; EXPULSION OF ADAM & EVE
FROM PARADISE

Tone 8

Romans 13:11-14:4

Matthew 6:14-21

MONDAY, MARCH 14

GREAT LENT BEGINS

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 28 FEBRUARY 2016

**SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON; APOSTLE ONESIMUS OF THE 70;
VENERABLE PAPHNUTIUS-MONK & DAUGHTER SAINT EUPHROSYNE-
NUN OF ALEXANDRIA; VENERABLE EUSEBIUS-HERMIT OF SYRIA;
VENERABLE PAPHNUTIUS-RECLUSE OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA
***SPECIAL MEETING AFTER SERVICE TO TALK ABOUT BISHOP
DANIEL'S VISIT TOPICS*****

TROPARION—TONE 6

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body.
Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it.
Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.
O Lord who didst rise from the dead: glory to Thee!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.

KONTAKION—TONE 6

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,
Raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.
He is the Savior of all,
The Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 6

READER: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

PEOPLE: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

READER: To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me.

PEOPLE: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

READER: O Lord, save Thy people.

PEOPLE: And bless Thine inheritance.

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 6

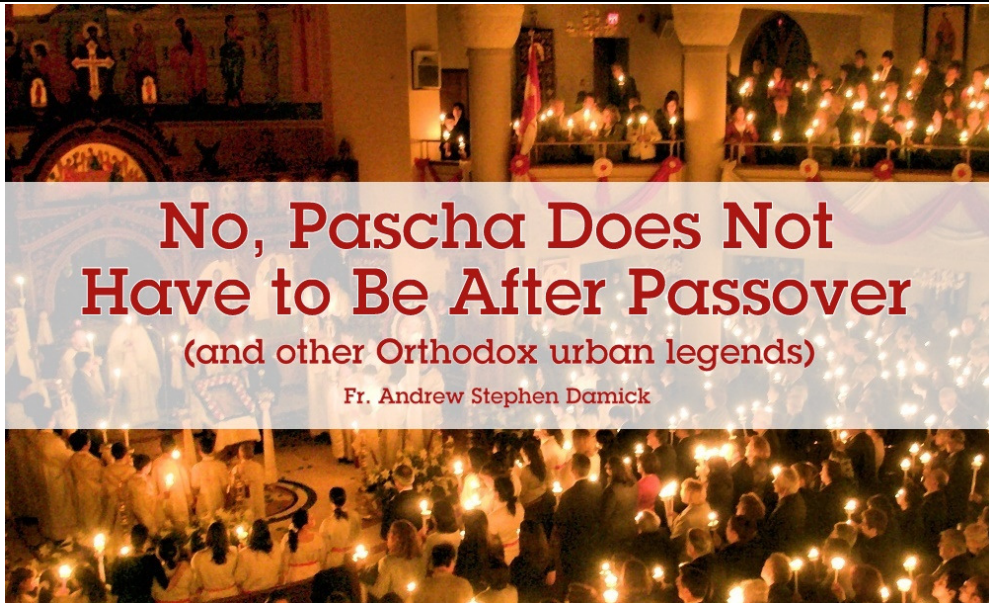
He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God.

He will say to the Lord: My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in whom I trust.

"Not too many years ago a young monastic aspirant went to Mount Athos. In talking with the venerable abbot of the monastery where he wished to stay, he told him, "Holy Father! My heart burns for the spiritual life, for asceticism, for unceasing communion with God, for obedience to an Elder. Instruct me, please, holy Father, that I may attain to spiritual advancement." Going to the bookshelf, the Abbot pulled down a copy of David Copperfield by Charles Dickens. "Read this, son," he said. "But Father!" objected the disturbed aspirant. "This is heterodox Victorian sentimentality, a product of the Western captivity! This isn't spiritual; it's not even Orthodox! I need writings which will teach me spirituality!" The Abbot smiled, saying, "Unless you first develop normal, human, Christian feelings and learn to view life as little Davey did—with simplicity, kindness, warmth, and forgiveness—then all the Orthodox 'spirituality' and Patristic writings will not only be of no help to you—they will turn you into a 'spiritual' monster and destroy your soul." From "Not of this World: The Life and Teaching of Fr. Seraphim Rose" by Monk Damascene Christensen

No, Pascha does not have to be after Passover (and other Orthodox urban legends)

March 31, 2015 by Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick



No, Pascha Does Not Have to Be After Passover

(and other Orthodox urban legends)

Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

Right around this time of year, various articles and images begin circulating, giving explanations as to why the Orthodox Pascha (Easter) celebration is usually a week or more after the Western Easter. Most will mention something about the Julian calendar and how its spring equinox is different from the one on the Gregorian calendar. The traditional formula for the date of Pascha (the *Paschalion*) is this: It is to be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox.

But one piece of the explanation that comes quite often is this:

Urban Legend #1: The Orthodox Paschal celebration must come after the Jewish Passover.

I just read [an article](#) today that made that claim. This gets repeated quite often. But it's an urban legend, folks.

Mind you, it's a *very old* urban legend, at least since the 12th century, when canonist [John Zonaras](#) noticed that, by his time, Pascha always seemed to follow the first day of Passover. But when the formula was decided at Nicea, Pascha actually often fell *before* Passover. He didn't seem to know that, though.

Here's the relevant text on the so-called "Zonaras Proviso" from the [OrthodoxWiki article on the Paschalion](#):

The decision of the Nicene council concerning Pascha was that it should be computed independently of any Rabbinic computations: hence, a Paschalion that is consistent with Nicene principles cannot have any built-in dependence on the Jewish calendar. Nevertheless, since at least the 12th century it has been widely believed that Christian Pascha is required always to follow, and never coincide with, the first day of Passover, which was by

then being celebrated on Nisan 15 in the Jewish calendar (that is, on the evening of the 14th day of the lunar month). By the 12th century the errors in the Julian calendar's equinoctial date and age of the moon had accumulated to the degree that Pascha did, in fact, always follow Jewish Nisan 15. This state of affairs continues to the present day, even though the Jewish calendar suffers from a slight solar drift of its own, because the Julian calendar's errors accumulate more rapidly than the Jewish calendar's. The 12th century canonist Joannes Zonaras seems to have been the first to state the principle that Pascha must always follow Jewish Nisan 15, so the principle is called the "Zonaras Proviso" after him. Upon examination, it appears that Zonaras derived his new rule from a misconstrual of Apostolic Canon 7, which reads as follows: "If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon celebrate the holy day of Easter before the vernal equinox with the Jews, let him be deposed." Zonaras found two prohibitions in this one statement: first, that Pascha must be celebrated after the vernal equinox; and second, that Pascha must never coincide with the Jewish feast of Passover. Although Zonaras' second prohibition has no foundation in the 4th century historical context, or in the grammatical meaning of the sentence, it resembles the fourth (implicit) Nicene principle closely enough to be confused with it. That is, the rule that Christians are not to go along "with the Jews" in setting the date of Pascha has been confused with the fear that if Passover happens to coincide with an independently determined Pascha, Christians would be wrongfully praying "with the Jews" just because both are praying on the same day.

Zonaras was, of course, actually wrong. And he also doesn't seem to remember that Passover is more than one day. It's not like the Jewish feast is over on the first day. So, if Pascha has to follow Passover, it certainly is doing it badly. In 2014, for instance, Pascha was on April 20, while Passover was April 14 (evening) to April 22 (morning). In 2011, Pascha was April 24, while Passover was April 18-26. One could go on.

More deeply than this, however, we have to ask this question: Why should the greatest of all Christian feasts depend on a feast day in another religion? And what about the many times in history when different Jews celebrated Passover on dates different from one another? Which Jews' Passover do we pick? And what if Jews all became Christians? Would we have to calculate a festival for a religion that has no actual followers?

The dating of Pascha is of course *related* to Passover in the sense that the formula puts Pascha around the same time, but since the First Council of Nicea, it is no longer dependent on it.

If you need the answer to the question, “Why is Orthodox Easter on a different date from Catholic and Protestant Easter?” I highly recommend the [very fine OrthodoxWiki article](#) on the Paschalion. In short, it’s complicated.

If you need a quick answer, here’s how I put it:

It’s supposed to be on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox. But many centuries ago, we devised predictive mathematical cycles that predicted when the equinox and full moon would be. They were very accurate, but over time, those predictions drifted away from what was happening in the sky. We’ve never updated our tables. In the 16th century, the West did.

That’s about as short as I can make it and still do some justice to the reality.

So let’s wrap this up with two more Orthodox urban legends regarding Pascha. They are both much easier to debunk than the first:

Urban Legend #2: Even though we have both Old Calendar and New Calendar churches, all Orthodox celebrate Pascha on the same day.

Not true. *Most* Orthodox do indeed put Pascha on the same actual day (though of course the date on the calendar will look different depending on whether you follow the Old or New Calendar). But the **Orthodox Church of Finland** and the **parishes in Estonia belonging to the Ecumenical Patriarchate** (but *not* those belonging to the Moscow Patriarchate) actually celebrate according to the updated Paschalion, which puts their Pascha on the same day as Western Easter every single year. (**UPDATE:** It looks like [those Estonian parishes have switched back.](#))

(And, if one wants to include the Oriental Orthodox in this picture, it should be noted that most Armenians and the Malankara church in India celebrate according to the Gregorian Paschalion, as well. The Coptic, Armenian (Jerusalem Patriarchate), Syriac, Ethiopian and Eritrean churches do not, however.)

And here’s our final Orthodox Paschal urban legend:

Urban Legend #3: Kyriopascha can never happen on the New Calendar.

“What is Kyriopascha?” you ask. It’s when the Annunciation (March 25) and Pascha coincide. (Lots more [here](#).) This happens once every several decades on the Julian (“Old”) calendar that most Orthodox in the world follow. (It happened last in 1991. The next time will be 2075.) Those who celebrate on the Revised Julian (“New”) calendar can indeed, never celebrate Kyriopascha, because the combination of the updating of the fixed feasts’ calculation (which includes Annunciation) with the retaining of the Julian Paschalion makes it so that Pascha can never fall as early as March 25.

The problem with this urban legend is that those parishes in Finland and Estonia are forgotten about. They do not use the Julian Paschalion. They use the Gregorian Paschalion (i.e., the updated one that came with the Gregorian calendar). So they celebrate Kyriopascha, too, though they celebrate it when the West would, not when the Julian calendar has it. The last Gregorian Kyriopascha was in 1951, and the next one will be in 2035. The two Kyriopaschas don’t coincide, but eventually, they will. Again, from [OrthodoxWiki](#):

There has as yet been no single year in which Kyriopascha was celebrated on both the Julian and Gregorian Calendars, though 232 would have been such a year had the two methods of calculation been in use at that time. The first year in which there will be a Kyriopascha on both the Gregorian and Julian Calendars is 6700, followed by 6779 and 6863.

So it depends on which “New Calendar” you’re referring to. On the Revised Julian calendar, no, there is no Kyriopascha. But on the Gregorian calendar that the Finns and some Estonians (used to) follow, yes, there is. But it’s different from the Julian Kyriopascha.

So there you have it. Please don’t spread Orthodox urban legends. Just because they’re Orthodox (i.e., from our Orthodox community) doesn’t mean they’re really Orthodox (i.e., the truth).

Update: *I’d just like to clarify from the start here that:*

- 1. I am not advocating any changes in Orthodox dogma or practice.*
- 2. I am trying to describe what that practice actually is.*
- 3. I do not think this is a matter of dogma, so it could theoretically be changed by the competent authorities.*
- 4. I have no strong opinion about whether the competent authorities ought to change this. I will happily continue to do whatever my bishop tells me to do.*

5. Any change that such competent authorities might choose to make, in my opinion (which matters little), ought to be about faithfulness to Orthodox conciliar tradition, whether or not such changes happen to align with what other Christians happen to be doing.

6. Even if we were to happen to align our Pascha with that of other Christians, I do not think that would really be any major step toward unity with them. We have much bigger fish to fry—dogmatic fish.

I have gotten some messages from folks demanding to know why I want to change Orthodoxy, why I hate the teachings of the Church so much, etc. Forgive me, but that is nonsense. I am trying to **describe what Orthodox practice actually is**, not advocate for any changes to it.

People fixate on things that give them a sense of identity. That's why this is apparently threatening—some folks have been told this their whole lives. How does one counteract an 800+ year old urban legend?

I chalk this up to bad catechism. Orthodox Christians should find their identity in Christ and in the saving dogmas proclaimed about Him universally in Orthodox tradition. How we calculate Pascha (which was not set by the Apostles) is not one of those things.

In any event, please read closely before jumping to conclusions. Thanks!

Fr. Harry Linsinbigler says [April 5, 2015 at 10:54 pm](#)

Father, with all due respect, I enjoy most of your posts, but this one is wrong. There is no evidence that the council of Nicea mentioned the full moon nor the equinox. We don't have the minutes, of course, but we do have the record of the saints who were there. All of them say nothing about equinox for full moon, but rather that it be the Sunday following the ancient reckoning of 14 Nisan/Aviv (after the Passover). As just one example, see here:

<http://www.orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/firecsyn.pdf>

Also, as we read the records, the first concern was for whether the first crops of spring had come about, not the moon. Besides all this, the ancient "new moon" was what we call the young crescent, at least one day but usually several days after what we today call "new moon." This would make 14 Nisan 1-3 days after what today it is reckoned to be by the modern religious Jews.

About Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

The Rev. Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick is pastor of [St. Paul Orthodox Church](#) of Emmaus, Pennsylvania, author of [Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy](#) and [An Introduction to God](#), as well as the forthcoming *Bearing God*. He is also host

of the [Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy](#) and [Roads from Emmaus](#) podcasts on Ancient Faith Radio. You can also follow him on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

On Sunday, March 27, 2016 from 2:30 to 3:30 pm, WQED (PBS) will air a one-hour special entitled, MYSTERIES OF THE JESUS PRAYER.

MYSTERIES OF THE JESUS PRAYER focuses on the ancient and obscure Christian prayer first recited by the Apostles more than 2,000 years ago in the Egyptian desert. Originally passed down verbally from one generation to the next, monks eventually transcribed the sacred words into instruction manuals originally intended only for those dedicated to a life of isolation. During the film, the Very Rev. Dr. John McGuckin and Dr. Norris J. Chumley travel to the caves, monasteries and convents where the faithful still chant this ancient meditation.

It may be airing in other cities at another time, but if you go to this website, you can click on WHERE TO WATCH and get information about when it will be shown in your city.

Please share this with other Orthodox Clergy in the Pittsburgh area so that they might include it in their weekly and monthly bulletins. It truly looks like an amazing program and one that demonstrates how the Orthodox Church has continued to recite this prayer for centuries.

Kweilin Nassar, WQED



Nymphios ("Bridegroom") - J37

+ + Wisdom, Thankfulness and the Love of God + +

In Proverbs 8:17, Wisdom speaks through the mouth of the Prophet and says *"I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find Me."* This Wisdom comes from God Himself, and opens up a simple and direct message for us to begin our journey into the Heavenly Kingdom where God both rules in Love and shines with Love into our hearts. How then can we begin?

It is always a dilemma when we speak of loving God for if we can feel His Love for us personally only when we ourselves are giving it, as it states above, we are at the mercy of our own feelings and thoughts. The real question then is how can we first love God? St. Mark the Ascetic gives us a way and a path to invite God's Love into our hearts so that we can gain the capacity to actually love Him more and more each day. St. Mark tells us

that if we try to

constantly bring to mind how many times and in how many ways God has helped us, nurtured us, saved us from danger and temptations, and given us life, breath, goodness, mercy and love, often when we didn't deserve it, and thank Him for it, this very state we have entered will enliven our hearts to begin to love Him more and more.

Unlike just emotional feelings or mere intellectual thoughts, our heart then becomes purified and strengthened so that we will truly wish to follow His Commandments and draw near to His mercy. It is simple, direct, and eminently possible even in our present and sinful condition. Let us be wise, thanking God each moment and so grow into a Love, a Great Love, for the truest and best Love of our Life, Jesus Christ! Amen.

The Monastics at St. Isaac of Syria Skete
and at the Convent of St. Silouan
and the Faithful at St. Nicholas Church
and the Staff at Orthodox Byzantine Icons
and St. Isaac's Bookstore.