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GREAT LENT

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Archbishop Daniel, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Yuriy, Archbishop Jovan, Bishop Robert, Metropolitan Savas, Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Paul Stoll, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John & Pani Mary Anne Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Protopresbyter William & Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smolynec, Father Lawrence & Matushka Sophia Daniels, Father Joe Cervo, Father John Harrold [Saint Sylvester], Igumen Patrick, Pani Mary Ann Chubenko, Father Jim Orr, Father Rick S3ilier, Panimatka Laryssa Charest, Fr. Vasyl Sendeha, Father Steve Hutnick [COVID-19], Father Victor Wronskyj [COVID-19], Father George & Dobrodijka Oksana Bazylevsky, Fr. Volodymyr Muzychka [COVID-19], Father Harry Linsinbigler [COVID-19], Archimandrite Raphael [COVID-19], Joshua Agosto and his family, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Joseph Sliwinsky, Gary & Linda Mechtly, 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, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Archbishop 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, Esther Holupka, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—young man with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Yvonne Christy, Father Deacon Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy,

Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle 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], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Strozh [young lady with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, 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 Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Manny "Lazarus" Lopez, Glenn & Lucas Burlack, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, Katherine Gorman, Pamela Jaquette, Sherri Walewski, Marika Zeliszczuk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Marta Charron, Mary [Corba], Margie Sekelsky, Gary Howell, Fran Fulton, Gina Catanese, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kevin Allen (from Ancient Faith Radio), Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Jodi Hanczar, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Martha Nezolyk, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Jim & Kitty, Phil Bouse, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaughaupt, Louis & Teresa Bercelli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Sarah Dorning, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Judi Danser, Darcy, Denis Strittmatter, Nancy, Ian Brick, Cecilia Barnhart, Logan Magorien, Pam & Gordon Grant, Debbie & Jerry Novosel, Noah Willard, Sandra Dillard, Danielle McCann, Barry [Father Jim Orr's cousin], Tim Joyce, Mike Pawlyshyn-Jeannie Stutchell's brother, Joe Samchuck—vocations, Albert Heckman, Brianna Stumpf, Stanley Porembka, David & Terry Coyne Hartnett, Mike C., Jennifer Scheirer [Nick Behun's daughter], Catherine Beecham [Father Bob's cousin], JoAnne & Dave Andrews, Rev. Peg Bowman, Pat Jennings, Tim

*Sams, Mike Ruzzi, Stephen Popichak—Fr. Bob's brother, Mary Kay Ludovicy, Pastor Sara Irwin, George Dilendorf, Andy Torick, Carol Behun, Erv Frye, William Lusherand, Colin Kirton—Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, Clifford, Joe Veto, Paul Riley, Tonee & Sydnee Turner, Annette Paluh, Cathy Lotinsky, Monk Andrew, Jeff & Buschra Kerr, Steven—Harry Batch's cousin, Rose Mary Pavlovich—Mary Anne Kuznik's Cousin, Margaret Sekelsky, Robert Sekelsky, Robert Rodriguez, Dollie Irvin, Joe Mrvos, Alexandra & Bowen, Katherine Kulik, Micky Delans [COVID-19], Pastor Terry Polen, Eleanor Kitt, Stacie & Gary, Maria Warholak, Stacie & Gary, Anna Sekelik, Christy, Mariruth, Rich & Judy Previc, Ben Williams, Denis Strittmatter, Father Joe Uzar—newly ordained, Tim—surgery, John Wakin, Olivia—young girl with a brain tumor, Rick & Sharon Morgan, John Stasko [triple by-pass], John, Kris & Kait, Jeff & Mary Jane Double [COVID-19], Terri Crosby-Vega [COVID-19], Kristi Wilson, Wendy LaGamba, Melissa Gross [hip replacement], Mike, Amy, Nathan, & Ben Forbeck [COVID-19], David Salazar, Ann Zurasky [knee replacement], James Mary, Barb Bookser, Dr. Paul Riley, David Hess, Serena, Wyatt, Makenzie, Jennifer, Carolyn Strittmatter, Barbara Shegat & Chaplain Rachelle Zazzu, Candace Irvin, Carol Muschick, Grace Love [knee replacement], Stacie Riley, Joseph Paul Cervo, Jr. [infant], Elizabeth [5-year-old], Lillian Skowvron, Pani Cathy Danczak, Sue & Greg Heinen, Paul Simpson [Father Bob's cousin, car accident], Sharon Curtis Rivas, Kathy Milcic, Lisa Bolan, David G. [cancer], Donna [dementia] & Darla, Linda Snow, Zack Blair [Pani Gina's nephew], Greg & Mary Lou Sheakley [Pani Gina's cousins—COVID], the McKenna family, David Gazella, Brian & Michele Cannone, Robert & Eleanor Rodrigues & family, Don Menagon [COVID-19], Father Nick ahaly [COVID-19], Mike Wilcox [COVID-19], Father Deacon James Rossetti & Diakonissa Kari—ordination!, Steve Sivulich, Michael Welsh, Nick Solominsky, Samantha & Lisa Houser, Sarah Stepanovich Clark, Julia Baloga, Diane Norton [cancer], Brett Crosby, Randy Lapuh, and Susan Pulcini—Father Ted Pulcini's mom. **ARNOLD:** Homer Paul Kline and Walter Sakol. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our April Babies: Robert Chicka on the 13th; Reader Alexander Popichak on the 15th; EMT Matthew Popichak on the 18th; Kim Shirley on the 18th; and Bill Kuznik on the 26th. May God grant them all Many Happy, Healthy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years! M'nohaya Lita! God Bless their families...

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE! PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE WORLD—AND IN OUR LIVES!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ... There is NOTHING to keep us from praying...for each other, for our family and friends, and most of all for the first responders—EMTs, nurses, doctors, firefighters, police officers, and members of our military who keep us safe. Be well and be **SAFE!!! God Bless!**

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.

SERVICES IN SLICKVILLE

**SUNDAY, April 03 SAINT BASIL THE GREAT-OBEDNITZA UPSTAIRS 10:30 AM
4th SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS—THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT; VENERABLE JAMES-BISHOP OF THE STUDIUM; SAINT CYRIL-BISHOP OF CATANIA; SAINT THOMAS-PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE**

Tone 8

Hebrews 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:8-19

Mark 9:17-31; Matthew 4:25-5:12

Litany in Blessed Memory of Frank Pendlyshok, John Cherepko, Ollie Pendlyshok, Stella Peanoske, Rose Lopushanski, Mary Haluszczak, Vladimir Hanczar, Michael Brittan, Deacon Dennis Lapushansky, & Lynne Giglione—Fr. Bob

**SUNDAY, April 10 SAINT BASIL THE GREAT-OBEDNITZA UPSTAIRS 10:30 AM
5th SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; SAINT MARY OF EGYPT & SAINT ZOSIMOS; SAINT HILARION THE NEW-ABBOT OF PELECETE; SAINT STEPHEN THE WONDERWORKER-ABBOT OF TRYGLIA; MARTYRS JONAH & BARACHISIUS & THOSE WITH THEM IN PERSIA; MARTYR EUSTRATIUS OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

Tone 1

Hebrews 9:11-14; Galatians 3:23-29

Mark 10:32-45; Luke 7:36-50

SUNDAY, April 17

OBEDNITZA UPSTAIRS

10:30 AM

6th SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; PALM SUNDAY; ENTRY OF THE LORD INTO JERUSALEM; SAINT JOSEPH THE HYMNOGRAPHER OF SICILY; SAINT GEORGE-MONK OF MOUNT MALEON IN THE PELOPONNESUS; SAINT JOSEPH THE MUCH-AILING OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA

Tone 2

Philippians 4:4-8

John 12:1-18

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 03 APRIL 2022

4th SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS—THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT; VENERABLE JAMES-BISHOP OF THE STUDIUM; SAINT CYRIL-BISHOP OF CATANIA; SAINT THOMAS-PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

TROPARION—TONE 1

O Dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body!
You were a wonder-worker, O our God-bearing Father John!
You received heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil, and prayer:
Healing the sick and souls of those drawn to you by faith.
Glory to Him who gave you strength!
Glory to Him who granted you a crown!
Glory to Him who through you grants healing to all!

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

KONTAKION—TONE 4

The Lord truly set you on the heights of abstinence,
To be a guiding star, showing the way to the universe,
O our Father and Teacher John.

PROKEIMENON—TONE 8

READER: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

PEOPLE: **Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!**

READER: Let the righteous exult in glory! Let them sing for joy on their couches!

PEOPLE: **Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!**

READER: Pray and make your vows.

PEOPLE: **Before the Lord our God!**

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 8

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

Those planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

When two people get angry with each other and Satan keeps them away, the Virgin Mary comes in the middle and puts a bouquet between them, the bouquet of the "peacemaker".

Do not wait for the other person to take your prize (the bouquet).

"Run first, apologize to the other and grab the bouquet.

St. John Chrysostom

Father Stel Muksuris:

A "GOOD" THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

When we "bless" another person, we speak goodness to them and so "give" God to them. Our good words, spoken in the Church, make possible the celebration of the Eucharist and the consecration of the Holy Gifts. Our good words give hope and peace to those who suffer. Our good words heal, both spiritually and physically. Our good words raise the dead and dispel evil. How powerful are our words because God rides them in order to arrive at their intended receiver. And how carefully must we choose our words as Christians, since we are called to a life of holiness and transparency, for others to see and hear God through us.

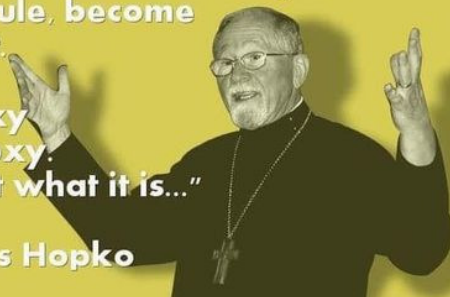
Have a GOOD week, everyone. ~ SSM



aspdebroth.org


"The Scripture is very clear: If you want to find yourself, lose yourself; you want to fulfill yourself, empty yourself; you want to be great, be the least; you want to be first, be the last; you want to be rich, become poor; you want to be wise, become a fool. If you want to rule, become a servant. ...really, Orthodoxy is paradoxy. That's just what it is..."

Fr Thomas Hopko



6 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT BE ASHAMED TO MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS IN PUBLIC

- You profess the faith in the crucified and risen Christ
- You remember Christ's supreme sacrifice on the holy cross
- You express your respect for God and the Church
- You invoke Christ's help, protection and blessing
- The cross is surnamed a weapon against the devil
- You become aware of and take up your personal cross



BASILICA.RO

Daniel N Ivanka Myers contribute:

After living in the USA for 11 years I've heard some questions over and over and now is a perfect time to answer them.

1. Are Ukraine and Russia the same country?

- No. Ukraine is an independent sovereign country with its own established territory, thousand-year history, culture, traditions, and language.

2. But Ukraine was part of Russia, wasn't it?

- No. Ukraine has never been part of Russia. I don't know why, but people think that the Soviet Union was Russia. It is not true. The Soviet Union was a union of 15 countries. Russia was just one of the 15 that established "friendly" dictatorship and control over 14 others. The goal of Russia was to wipe out the national identity of the nations by destroying their ethnic, linguistic, and cultural background. Somehow in Ukrainians Soviet Russia saw a bigger danger than in other nationalities and decided to kill them by starvation. You can find a lot of information online about 1932-1933 Holodomor (the Great Famine). The estimated death toll is 7-10 million Ukrainians.

3. Are Ukrainian and Russian basically the same language?

- No. I don't know why people understand that Spanish and Portuguese are different, Russian, and Polish are different, but they question Ukrainian and Russian... Ukrainian is not a dialect of Russian either. Most Ukrainians understand, speak, and read in Russian because our grandparents were forced to speak Russian, our schools were in Russian, our documents were in Russian. When I was in elementary school out of 30 students only I and a few others spoke Ukrainian because it was

not common. Soviet Russia did all that was possible to wipe out our language.

4. How Ukrainians can fight their own people in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions?

- All the world knows how dirty Putin's politics are. Everyone knows that he is a liar. If you want to believe his lies, it is your choice and I can't do anything about it. The truth is: in 2014 Putin invaded two eastern regions of Ukraine claiming that the population wanted his protection. He destroyed cities, killed civilians, and paid a few traitors to make a show. Most of the population evacuated to the other parts of Ukraine looking for new jobs, housing, and peaceful life.

5. But what about Crimea?

- As a child I spent a lot of summers in the autonomous republic of Crimea. It was a great place to visit and relax on the seashore. I have never heard indigenous people of Crimean Tatars complaining that Ukrainians are persecuting them, and they need Russian protection. Can you imagine Puerto Ricans complaining that Americans persecute them and they need Cuban protection?

6. Are your family and friends in Poland now? (The question that I heard a lot last week)

- I don't know if people understand how big Ukraine is. The population of Ukraine is 44 MILLION! Yes, since last week a lot of Ukrainians fled the country because of the Russian invasion but there is no way for so many civilians to exit the country during the war. I have only one relative with her little daughter who crossed the border after the Russian invasion. The rest of my family and friends are in Ukraine.

Also, I would like to say that I am very proud of my country. We LOVE freedom! We love to be free and we love people who want to be free. We didn't invade or occupy anyone's territory; we're just protecting our land and our nation.

The Third Sunday of Great Lent

Veneration of the Holy Cross Mark 8:34-38, 9:1

And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. (KJV)

Today is the Sunday of the Cross in the Holy Orthodox Church. The Third Sunday of Great Lent each year focuses on the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Great Lent is well underway.

Believers adhering to the fasting practices of the Church sense within the self the seriousness of the journey to Pascha. The journey to Pascha always includes the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Each person benefits by thinking about the cross in his or her personal life. The cross in personal life is to be addressed in the way Jesus Christ addressed His Cross. Jesus went to the Cross in great humility, with love and forgiveness.

Jesus could have averted His arrest, trial and crucifixion. When approached to be taken into custody, Jesus said to those with Him that He need not be defended by use of the sword.

Jesus was fully aware of the protection available to Him. He said "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Mt.26:53)

Today believers do well to draw strength from Jesus Christ's example to face the cross in personal life. Resolutely, with firm faith in Jesus Christ, let us face the cross which life has brought to us.

Our personal cross may be a devastating illness, the sudden loss of a loved one or a difficult and abusive relationship. An addiction, a family member with a serious health problem, or a sudden job loss may be the cross we are facing.

Jesus Christ's life, death and Resurrection teaches us by example. The Holy Gospel states Jesus Christ's Cross preceded His Resurrection. The darkness and agony of the Cross came before the joy of the Resurrection.

Let us to look to Jesus Christ for the joy that will be revealed to us in following Him when we take up our cross responsibly in faith. Strong faith and complete trust in Jesus Christ are necessary to heed the words of today's Gospel.

Believers have the benefit of the Gospel to verify the Resurrection followed the Crucifixion. The Gospel account of Jesus' Resurrection gives hope and strength for believers to proceed in dealing with the personal crosses in life.

Each of us may feel pain and agony from our cross. The Lord Jesus Christ is always present to turn to when the pain becomes excruciating. We have Jesus' example of enduring pain and agony before His Resurrection.

We do not know what lies before us. We have Jesus' assurance that if we lose our life for Christ and the Gospel, we will save our life. Jesus gives us the reason to pick up our cross and follow Him.

God's Holy Church puts Jesus' Cross in front of us at this time of Great Lent. The Cross is a source of strength in the Lenten journey. We know that beyond the Cross lies the joy of the Resurrection.

We have the opportunity at each remaining moment of Great Lent to turn to Jesus Christ in prayer. Jesus Christ is present to help us deal with any uncertainty, pain and agony existing within our lives.

Great Lent is the time for serious unity with Jesus Christ. Great Lent is the time for renewal in Christ. The perils and distractions in the world having nothing to do with Christ are to be excluded from our lives during Great Lent.

Great Lent is the time to focus on loving Jesus Christ and living in Christ with great zeal. The hunger in the soul yearns for the unity with Christ which is fully the focus during Great Lent.

The Church provides the atmosphere, the teachings, and the wisdom of centuries to guide believers to Paschal joy. The Church helps us with the personal crosses which feel heavy and painful today.

Jesus is here with us to give the strength necessary to face our crosses. Jesus is always present to assist us and strengthen us to face crosses that arise in life. Jesus is love incarnate capable of healing the deepest hurt and deepest pain.

The Resurrection is proof that Jesus Christ defeated the last and greatest human barrier when He defeated death. We benefit from turning to Jesus to learn more about His victory over death.

The Lenten journey provides necessary instruction and nourishment. Holy Week will add vital learning and life-changing opportunities. Focusing on Jesus Christ in the journey to Pascha enables us to address the personal cross in our life.

Our renewal in Christ and our life in Christ are inseparable from the way we deal with the cross in our life. Let us learn from Jesus Christ and look forward to the joy that comes from taking up our cross and following Him.

The Third Sunday of Great Lent. Veneration of the Cross. Venerable Benedict of Nursia. March 14/27, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

Father Joseph Cervo:

Today, MARCH 18, the Feast of St. Nikolai (Velimirovich) a 20th Century Saint who endured arrest and incarceration in the Nazi concentration camp of Dachau. After the prisoners were freed by Allied forces, he spent the final 6 years of his life as Abbott of St. Tikhon

Monastery & Rector of the Seminary in northeastern Pennsylvania, until his blessed repose on this date in 1956. In light of the persecution and suffering that he endured and witnessed with others, he could, nevertheless, write this reflective prayer on blessing one's enemies. This is a powerful reminder when we feel the urge to avenge or hold grudges toward those who have offended or hurt us.

Pray for us sinners, holy Saint Nikolai!

St. Nikolai Velimirovich: Bless My Enemies O Lord

Enemies have driven me into your embrace more than friends have.

Friends have bound me to earth, enemies have loosed me from earth and have demolished all my aspirations in the world.

Enemies have made me a stranger in worldly realms and an extraneous inhabitant of the world. Just as a hunted animal finds safer shelter than an un hunted animal does, so have I, persecuted by enemies, found the safest sanctuary, having ensconced myself beneath your tabernacle, where neither friends nor enemies can slay my soul.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them.

They, rather than I, have confessed my sins before the world.

They have punished me, whenever I have hesitated to punish myself.

They have tormented me, whenever I have tried to flee torments.

They have scolded me, whenever I have flattered myself.

They have spat upon me, whenever I have filled myself with arrogance.

Bless my enemies, O Lord, Even I bless them and do not curse them.

Whenever I have made myself wise, they have called me foolish.

Whenever I have made myself mighty, they have mocked me as though I were a dwarf.

Whenever I have wanted to lead people, they have shoved me into the background.

Whenever I have rushed to enrich myself, they have prevented me with an iron hand.

Whenever I thought that I would sleep peacefully, they have wakened me from sleep.

Whenever I have tried to build a home for a long and tranquil life, they have demolished it and driven me out.

Truly, enemies have cut me loose from the world and have stretched out my hands to the hem of your garment.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them. Bless them and multiply them; multiply them and make them even more bitterly against me:

so that my fleeing to You may have no return;

so that all hope in men may be scattered like cobwebs;

so that absolute serenity may begin to reign in my soul;
so that my heart may become the grave of my two evil twins,
arrogance and anger;

so that I might amass all my treasure in heaven;
ah, so that I may for once be freed from self-deception, which has
entangled me in the dreadful web of illusory life.

Enemies have taught me to know what hardly anyone knows that a
person has no enemies in the world except himself.

One hates his enemies only when he fails to realize that they are not
enemies, but cruel friends.

It is truly difficult for me to say who has done me more good and who
has done me more evil in the world: friends or enemies.

Therefore bless, O Lord, both my friends and enemies.

A slave curses enemies, for he does not understand. But a son blesses
them, for he understands.

Book: Prayers by the Lake by St Nikolai Velimirovich

***For a son knows that his enemies cannot touch his life.
Therefore, he freely steps among them and prays to God for them.***

+ St. Nikolai Velimirovich



Icon of St. Nikolai Velimirovich

WORDS OF TRUTH, WORDS OF COMFORT, WORDS FOR TODAY

"We have within us deeply rooted weaknesses, passions, and defects. This can not all be cut out with one sharp motion, but patience, persistence, care and attention. The path leading to perfection is long. Pray to God so

that he will strengthen you. Patiently accept your falls and, having stood up, immediately run to God, not remaining in that place where you have fallen. Do not despair if you keep falling into your old sins. Many of them are strong because they have received the force of habit. Only with the passage of time and with fervor will they be conquered. Don't let anything deprive you of hope." — *St. Nektarios of Aegina*

