



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

**714 Westmoreland Avenue**  
**PO Box 3**  
**Slickville, PA 15684-0003**  
**[www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org](http://www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org)**  
Very Rev. Father Robert Popichak, Pastor  
23 Station Street  
Carnegie, PA 15106-3014  
[412] 956-6626 cell  
[rpopichak@alumni.cmu.edu](mailto:rpopichak@alumni.cmu.edu)

**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, Metropolitan Savas, Father Paul & Pani Judy 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, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smolynec, Father Lawrence Daniels, Father Joe & Protinica Linda Cervo, Igumen Patrick, Father Jim Orr, Father Rick Seilier, Panimatka Laryssa Charest, Father Vasyl Sendeha, Father George & Dobrodijka Oksana Bazylevsky, Father Angelo Artemas, Father John Haluszczak, Dr. Christina Nellis, Father Joshua [Anna], Father Justin (Todd) Mokhiber, Pani Cathy Danczak, Protopresbyter Gerald Ozlanski, Father James Norton, Monk Andrew, Father Dan & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Pastor Terry & Lisa Polen, Chaplain Rachelle Zazzu, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Gary & Linda Mechtly, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, 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, 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, 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, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Yvonne Christy, Father Deacon Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, 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, Gene Blair [Pani Gina's dad], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [young lady with cerebral palsy], Patricia

Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Cher Mount, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, 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, Mira Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, 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 Zeliszcuk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Margie Sekelsky, Fran Fulton, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaugenhaupt, Louis Berceli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Darcy, 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, Stephen Popichak—Fr. Bob's brother, 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 & Jan Jennings, Mike Ruzzi, Mary Kay Ludovicy, George Dilendorf, Sharon Torick, Carol Behun, Erv Frye, William Lusherand, Colin Kirton—Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, Clifford, Paul Riley, Tonee & Sydnee Turner, Annette Paluh, Theresa Paluh, Cathy Lotinsky, Jeff & Buschra Kerr, Margaret Sekelsky, Robert Sekelsky, Robert Rodriguez, Rita & Joe Mrvos, Alexandra & Bowen, Katherine Kulik, Eleanor Kitt, Maria Warholak, Christy, Mariruth, Judy Previc, Ben Williams, Tim—surgery, Olivia—girl with a brain tumor, Rick & Sharon Morgan, John Stasko, John, Kris, & Kait, Wendy LaGamba, Melissa Gross [hip replacement], Amy Forbeck, David Salazar, Dr. Paul Riley, David Hess, Serena, Wyatt, Makenzie, Jennifer, Alexandra Roberts, Candace, Dave, Jared, & Beth Irvin, Carol Muschick, Grace Love [knee replacement], Joseph Paul Cervo, Jr., Elizabeth, Susan & Greg Heinen, Paul Simpson [Father Bob's cousin], Sharon Curtis Rivas, Kathy Milcic, Lisa Bolan, David G. [cancer], Donna

*[dementia] & Darla, Adam Snow, the McKenna family, David Gazella, Brian & Michele Cannone, the Rodrigues family, Michael Welsh, Nick Solominsky, Samantha & Lisa Houser, Sarah Stepanovich Clark, Julia Baloga, Brett Crosby, Randy Lapuh, Henry Tkacik, Diane & Arthur Chaklis, Denny Mader, Zoe Oswalt—Fr. Bob's cousin, Barbette [cancer] & Scott, Kristin [cancer], Erm Hartmann, Barbara Bookser, Bob Mazzuca, Marko, Taylor, Terri Crosby-Vega, Christine Mohamed & family, Tammy Marsico, Terry & David Hartnett, Jamie Ball, Kay Williams, Hannah Stewart, Jim Wyko—Alex's friend, Dan Losego, Lisa Bruce, Yvette, Barry Bender, Andrew Zelleznick, Byron & Cecilia Scott, Vespina, Michelle Russo, Julie Tripodi, Debbie—HTUCC, Barbara Morvay, David Salsar, N&O, Randy & Adrienne Kuny, Vince Berardinelli, Mason Martin [Karns City HS QB] & family, Martin Mrvos, Jeff McCoy, Lauren & Sloane Valentina Persico, Alexis & Colton Rosati, Jessica Shirley, Mark [kidney cancer], Steve Milcic, Wilbert Wagner, Bob Wojciechowski, Ashley, Beth, Sharon Svitek, Laura, Christopher, & Jane Dickson, Luke D, Diane Murphy, Kristin Vaughn [Harry's daughter], George Petronsky, Doug & Darcie Burkholder, Michael, Jeane, and Katie Byerly, McGrath, Samantha Lopez, Bob [cancer], Syble Elliott, Maria Ancevski, Krystyna, John, & Jeffrey, Dottie & family, Bonny Diver & Ashley Smock, Steve, Jill Morocco, Mike Pelino, Maddie Stewart, Hutchinson Family, David Urban, Vicky Moore, Casi [cancer], Ashley & Andy, Marion Mamula, Dominic [cancer], Diane Hughes, Jenny Case, Mary & Carl Stepanovich, Susie Fierst, Edward Poturich, Jeff, Chris, & Mills family, Kate Rapina & Mother Oksana, Sarah's son, Rachel, Alex, & little Charlie, Steve & Vonnie Gerson, Eva, Pamela & Doug, and Lauren, Dan, & Daphne Iona... We pray that God will grant them all a complete and speedy recovery.*

**Never begin lunch or dinner, or finish them, without fervent prayer to the Lord God as, unfortunately, very many Christians of our time do. Metropolitan Gregory (Postnikov) of St. Petersburg, How to Live a Holy Life p.86**

**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 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] 956-6626.

## **SERVICES IN SLICKVILLE**

**SUNDAY, September 14**

**\*\*\*\*\*NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE\*\*\*\*\***

**14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; CHURCH NEW YEAR; SAINT SYMEON  
STYLITES & HIS MOTHER SAINT MARINA; RIGHTEOUS JOSHUA-SON OF  
NUN; MARTYRS CASSIA & HER BROTHERS-EVODIUS & HERMOGENES;  
MARTYR ATHANASIAS**

*Tone 5*

2 Corinthians 1:21=2:4; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Colossians 3:12-16  
Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 4:16-22; Matthew 11:27-30

**SUNDAY, September 21 OBEDNITZA—SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM—UPSTAIRS 10:30 AM  
15<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION; NATIVITY  
OF OUR MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY**

*Tone 6*

Galatians 6:11-18; 2 Corinthians 4:6-15; Philippians 2:5-11  
John 3:13-17; Matthew 22:35-46; Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28

**SUNDAY, September 28**

**\*\*\*\*\*NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE\*\*\*\*\***

**16<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE  
CROSS; AFTERFEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS; GREAT-MARTYR  
NICETAS THE GOTH; UNCOVERING OF THE RELICS OF SAINT ACACIUS THE  
CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF MELITENE; MARTYRS THEODOTUS,  
ASCLEPIODOTUS, & MAXIMUS OF ADRIANOPOLIS; UNCOVERING OF THE  
RELICS OF THE HOLY PROTOMARTYR & ARCHDEACON STEPHEN**

*Tone 7*

Galatians 2:16-20; Corinthians 6:1-10  
Mark 8:34-9:1; Matthew 25:14-30

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 14 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**RIGHTEOUS JOSHUA-SON OF NUN; MARTYRS CASSIA & HER  
BROTHERS-EVODIUS & HERMOGENES; MARTYR ATHANASIAS**

**\*\*\*\*\*NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE\*\*\*\*\***

**TROPARION—TONE 5**

Let the faithful praise and worship the Word,  
Coeternal with the Father and the Spirit;  
Born for our salvation from the Virgin;  
For He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,  
To endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection!

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

**KONTAKION—TONE 5**

Thou didst descend into Hell, O my Savior, Shattering its gates as  
almighty;  
Resurrecting the dead as Creator, And destroying the sting of death.  
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man,  
And we all cry to Thee: O Lord, save us!

**PROKEIMENON—TONE 5**

READER: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this  
generation forever.

PEOPLE: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this  
generation forever.

READER: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly.

PEOPLE: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this  
generation forever.

READER: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us...

PEOPLE: From this generation forever.

**ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 5**

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will  
proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.

Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever, and my truth will  
be prepared in the heavens.

Where God is not visible, He actually exists!  
Where you think you are alone, that is where God surrounds you.  
Where you say that no one hears you, know that God reads your mind.  
Where your faith does not reach, God's hand reaches.



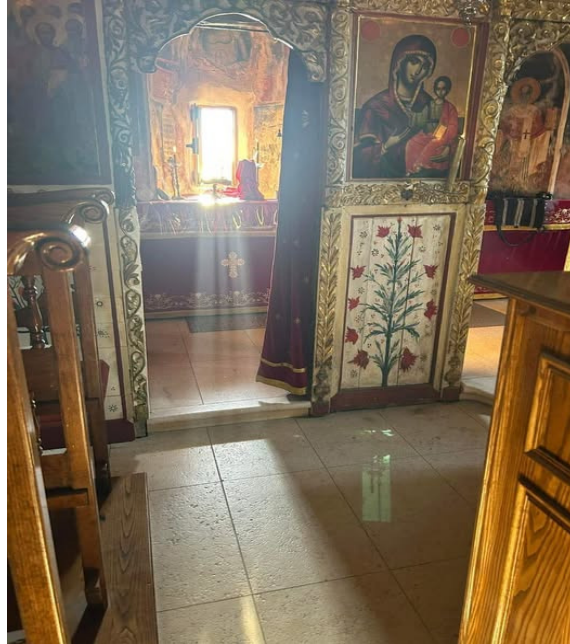
Where you reach your limits, He has gone beyond them and is waiting for you, looking you in the eyes.

Where you think He does not see you, He looks at His palm and your drawing appears.

Where God is not visible, see Him with the eyes of your soul!

IF you seek Him, you will find Him, this is what He wants to appear everywhere in your life!

*Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia and Lavreotiki*



## **ENCOUNTERING ORTHODOXY**

### ***Encountering the holiness and peace of the Ancient Church***

The very first time I entered an Orthodox church, I felt drawn to Her. There was a tangible, inner tug, and an overwhelming sense of peace, holiness, and awe, emanating from the very walls of the temple. The serving clergy were not the focus of the service, as I'd experienced in my protestant upbringing, but seemed to be moving within the walls of their temple, as if servants, or, given the beauty of their vestments, courtiers to an emperor. The focus was not on men, but on the holiness of God. I felt an overwhelming desire to be a part of this religion, but, at the time, allowed the ethnic, and language, differences to keep me from returning.

Eventually, as is evidenced by my present vocation, I did return, and can not even imagine how I could have stayed away, for some twenty years, after having tasted "the heavenly realm." Orthodoxy is like that, for it seems almost familiar to many first timers, as though we've known this faith from our very conception.

I remember seeing my very first hand painted icon. It was an icon of Christ, and I felt drawn into it, wanting to embrace it (or, perhaps more

correctly, being embraced by it.) This first encounter was in 1968, and in the small, private chapel of a friend. This encounter came about a month after I'd driven through Northern California's Redwood National Forest, beholding the thousand year old, towering trees. Both the icon, and the Redwoods, had an enormous impact on my young soul. They both seemed to offer me sanctuary, and a sense of peace. Both made me feel I'd encountered something precious, ageless, and sacred. I still feel the same, as an aging monk.

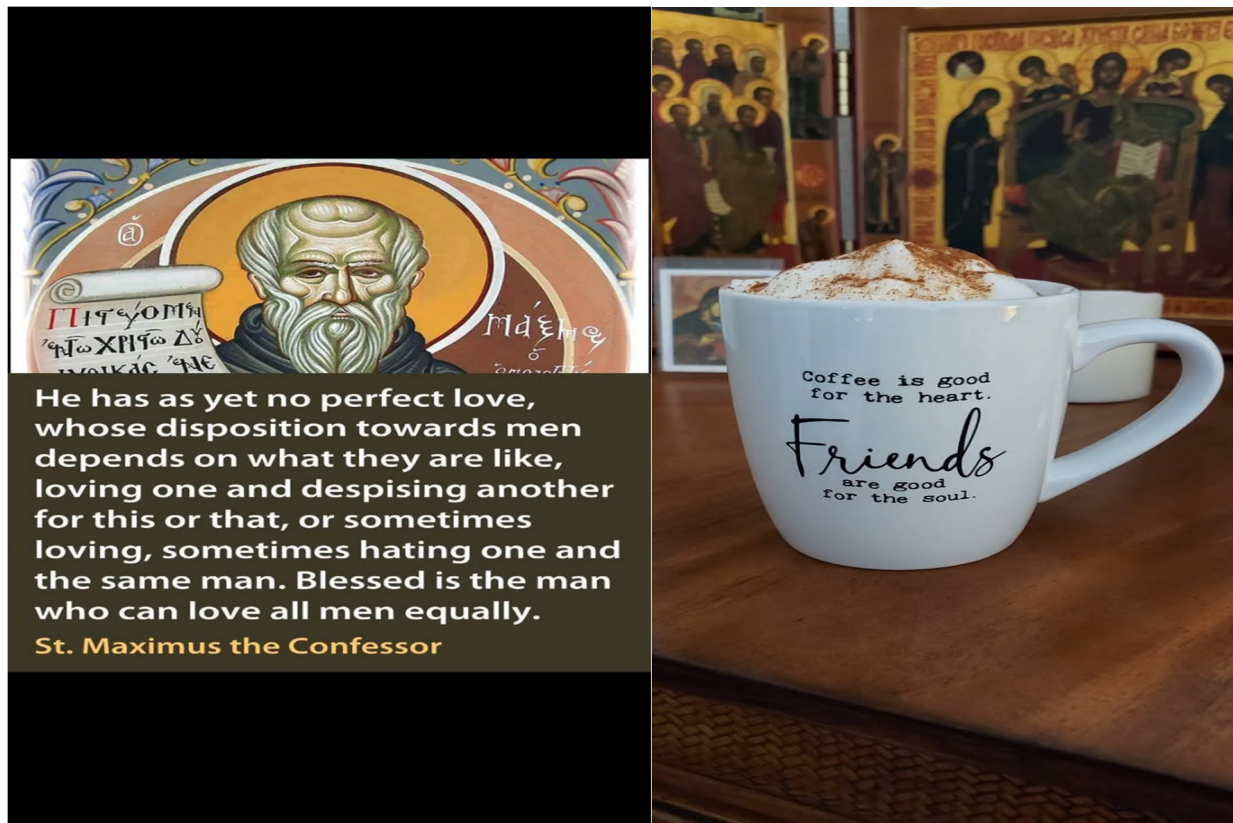
We humans are material beings, having been given bodies by our Creator. This Creator God has placed us in a material world, surrounded by things we can touch, see, smell, taste, and hear. Orthodox temples, by their very nature, allow us to commune with this very God, Who has given each of us the ability to touch, see, smell, taste, and hear. It is through the material world that God has chosen to unite Himself to us, His creatures. The Logos (The Word), Christ Himself, by Whom everything that is, came into being, has come down from heaven, and embraced us, as His own.

My last trip through the Redwoods, brought back memories of my first encounter with an icon of Christ. How could they not, for it is the very Christ, depicted in the icon, Who created the Redwoods, and all that is beautiful, and sacred.

With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon



**As we repeatedly catch ourselves descending to the level of thought (the realm of action in time), we can call ourselves back to the level of the spirit (the realm of stillness in eternity). Later, through continual practice, we will be able to watch the thoughts coming, trying to gain admittance into our minds by stealing our attention. *Hieromonk Damascene (Christensen), Christ the Eternal Tao p.306***



He has as yet no perfect love,  
whose disposition towards men  
depends on what they are like,  
loving one and despising another  
for this or that, or sometimes  
loving, sometimes hating one and  
the same man. Blessed is the man  
who can love all men equally.

**St. Maximus the Confessor**

### **Labor**

***Psalm 90:10-The days of our years are threescore years and ten;  
and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their  
strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.***  
(KJV)

Earthly life is limited for each Christian and God's Kingdom is the desired goal. Each person is given gifts and talents to be used in ways pleasing to the Lord. Daily decisions determine whether the believer enters the Kingdom of God. Personal choices reflect whether the believer labors for the glory of the Lord. Laboring for the Lord takes many forms and reveals the contents of the heart. The multitude of saints and their diversity witnesses to laboring for the Lord.

***Psalm 104:23-Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until  
the evening.*** (KJV)

Believers are expected to be conscientious in the use of talents from the Lord. Relationships developed while laboring are to be consistent with Divine teachings. Greed, unsafe environments, and abuse are foreign to healthy labor conditions. Work at all levels is to be done conscientiously and with fundamental integrity. Workplace safety is a primary concern for laborers going about their daily work. Laborers are created and are to be treated as the image and likeness of God. (Gen. 1:26) The way a workplace operates determines if it conforms to the Lord's standards.



***Psalm 127:1-Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. (KJV)***

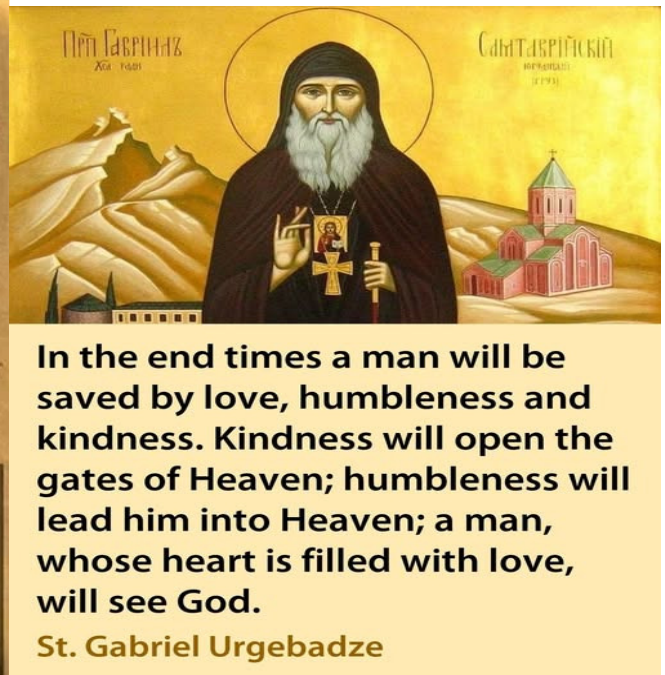
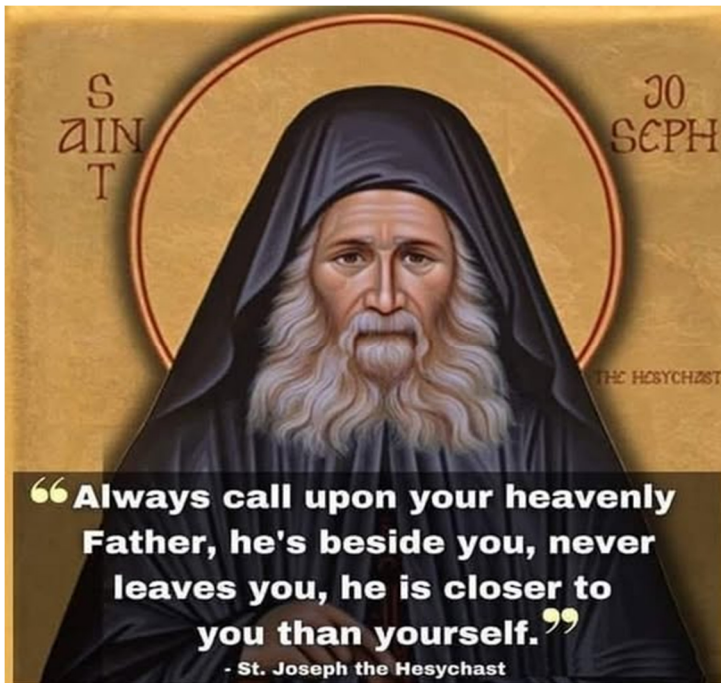
The principles and standards of employers affect the quality of the workplace. Laborers in the workplace know whether they are treated as God's creations. Work performed in God-pleasing conditions reaches highest levels of perfection. The atmosphere in God-pleasing workplaces fosters healthy worker performance. Laborers and those employing laborers do well to look to the Lord for direction. Work outcomes are affected by the agreed views of laborers and employers.

***Psalm 128:2-For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. (KJV)***

The worker experiences personal satisfaction and fruits from a good day's labor. Doing work pleasing to the Lord results in a sense of healthy accomplishment. Laborers are grateful to the Lord when the workday goes well and ends well. Giving thanks to the Lord has a consistent place in the grateful laborer's life. Joy results when employers and employees work together in God-pleasing ways. Great understanding is needed for work conditions to be joyful for the laborer.

*Afterfeast of the Dormition of the Mother of God. The Image Not Made by Hands of Our Lord. St. Eustatius. St. Roman. St. Raphaelo of Banat. August 16/29, 2025. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*

**One of the great obstacles to preserving inner peace is binding ourselves by some unchangeable law—a set and undeviating rule—to read, say, so many psalms, so many chapters from the Gospels, and so many chapters from the Epistles. After we have set such rules for ourselves, we sometimes get in a hurry to complete the readings, forgetting to concern ourselves with whether our heart is touched by them or not—or whether spiritual thoughts and contemplations arise in our mind. *Fr. Jack Sparks, Victory in the Unseen Warfare p.106***



**Do everything in opposition to that which the enemy suggests to you: he suggests to you to hate those who offend you—you must love them; bless those who curse you, and do not torment those who take away your property, but give it away willingly; when you want to laugh—weep; when you feel despondent—endeavour to be glad; *Righteous John, Wonderworker of Kronstadt, My Life in Christ* p.224**

### **The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost Matthew 19:16-26**

*And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who*

*then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. (KJV)*

We are dependent on the Lord God for each moment of life. Each breath, each step, each word uttered are due to the blessings of God. God determines how long we live earthly life and whether we experience eternal life.

The rich man in the current Gospel expressed interest in eternal life. The man asked Jesus what was required of him for eternal life. Each person baptized into Christ has the Kingdom of God and eternal life as primary goals.

The way daily life is lived determines whether the believer will experience the Kingdom and eternal life. Our daily relationships, personal interests and goals will affect and determine life's outcome.

Whether the Lord God is primary in our heart, mind, and soul shapes and guides each day of our lives. The rich man held his personal possessions first in his heart. He was unwilling to listen to the Lord Jesus in disposing of his possessions.

Jesus told the disciples everything is possible with God. Had the rich man heeded the words of Jesus, the rich man would have eternal life. The rich man greatly treasured his earthly possessions and denied himself eternal life.

Each day believers choose whether to listen and be guided by the word of God. At each Divine Liturgy believers hear the Gospel and sermon to guide them. The word of God is present each day to guide believers.

Choosing to heed the words of Jesus Christ enables believers to stay on the path to the Kingdom and eternal life. Too often, individuals maintain primary goals that have nothing to do with God's Kingdom and eternal life.

Many people work at jobs to gain riches and maintain possessions far more than they will ever need. In today's world, the homes of the wealthy are getting bigger while homelessness seems to increase with each passing day.

Something is wrong with the fundamental beliefs in our society. Mass shootings have become commonplace. Children are too often abused and misused. Anxiety and fear are too commonplace.

An unsettledness and uncertainty are present. Certainty for the believer is the Lord God and the way of the Lord. Listening carefully to the Lord and pleasing the Lord in daily actions keep the believer on the path to the Kingdom and eternal life.

God is ever-present and within reach to keep believers on the narrow path necessary. Believers attentive to the Lord's teachings will find life's challenges to be manageable.

Joy comes from being attentive to the Lord and embracing the way of the Lord. Believers face each day with confidence when united with the Lord. Repentance and communion keep the Lord first in the heart, mind, and soul.

When the Lord is life's Guide and Goal, all else is in proper perspective. The believer's view of life will guide him or her to their ultimate destination. The rich man was blinded by his possessions. His possessions guided his decision-making.

When God's Kingdom and eternal life are primary goals for the believer, each decision will conform to these goals. Wise believers periodically assess and reassess whether they are living true to the Lord's teachings.

Repentance and new beginnings in the Lord are always possible. The Lord encourages believers to repent, confess, and begin anew. Reorienting life to the narrow path of the Kingdom is always possible.

Choosing to repent may momentarily feel painful, but in the end, the result is newness in Christ. God is loving and merciful. God desires for believers to travel the narrow path to the Kingdom and eternal life.

The Church proclaims the Gospel at each Divine Liturgy to guide believers. Open hearts, minds and souls work to put the teachings into practice. Believers need not feel overwhelmed by life's challenges.

Believers are never alone. God is always near and present. The Church is welcoming and protective. God's presence and love heal the hurting and anxious believer. God removes fear from daily life. God provides assurance.

God is the Certainty in uncertain times. God is the Haven for mourners and the homeless. God is the Kingdom and Eternal Life for the seekers and travelers in life. Treasures in heaven exceed the value of earthly possessions.

*The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Martyrs Florus and Laurus of Illyria. Venerable Father John of Rila. August 18/31, 2025. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*

**Only the Holy Spirit can purify the intellect, for unless a greater power comes and overthrows the despoiler, what he has taken captive will never be set free (cf. Luke 11:21-22). In every way, therefore, and especially through peace of soul, we must make ourselves a dwelling-place for the Holy Spirit. St. Diadochus, bishop of Photike in Epirus, Philokalia, Vol. 1 p.260**