

Thursday, January 26, 2017

*St. Basil Church members exist to BE Disciples,
MAKE Disciples, and GROW Disciples of Jesus Christ.*

Godparenting in God's Grace

by Fr Allan Boyd

Over the course of my time as an Orthodox Christian, I've witnessed some amazingly engaged, purposeful and spiritually focused godparents. Mine and Presvytera's godmother is one of those people. She exemplifies what we hope to grow into as godparents and we're grateful that we've had her example. While being a godparent is a great honor, it's important to realize that godparenting carries a marvelous spiritual responsibility. God asks each godparent to assist in leading their godchild to the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, the sacred role of the godparent should be taken with joyful spiritual resolve. How important is this roll of leading someone (especially a child) to the Kingdom of Heaven? St. Theophan the Recluse says that, of all holy endeavors ***there is no holier one.***



There are so many enchanting distractions and damaging influences that present enormous challenges to this holy endeavor. Thus, both the godparents and the parents should work in harmony, helping their children to develop a love for the faith and to see its importance in their lives. How does this happen? In the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy, God gives instructions to the Israelites about how to bring children up in the faith. After giving them the basics of the faith, God essentially tells them:

Impress your children's hearts with the things of God.
Turn every opportunity into a teachable moment.



“Keep these things first and foremost on your hearts so that you impress your children with them. Talk about them when you're sitting with your children anywhere...when you're taking them someplace on the road...when you put them to bed at night...and when you wake them up in the morning. Whenever you put your hand to do something, make sure it's being focused on doing these things. Whatever you put your mind to think upon, make sure it's always focused on being these things. Whenever you enter or exit your home or your yard, make sure that these things are there in the center of it all.”

So, God wants us to understand that children are only led to the Kingdom of Heaven when they see us always living the faith very purposefully in front

of them and we make every moment a teachable one.

Thus, when choosing a godparent for our child, we need to make sure that we choose someone who will honor this role with spiritual purpose of heart. We need to choose godparents who know their faith...or who are at least actively engaged in learning their faith and are committed to growing their own life in Christ. It's a grievous disservice to our children when we choose godparents for them who don't come to church every Sunday, and who aren't enthusiastically involved in growing in their faith. Of course, the same problem exists when parents, through their own negligence, abdicate their faith in front of their children. As a result, the children whom God entrusted with their care, may never know the joy that comes from a life united with Christ, and may never gain the tools needed to navigate the storms of life.

The early Church felt that instructing the adult-faithful in the faith was essential for equipping them to navigate the surrounding pagan world. So, adult candidates for baptism were taught the foundational elements of the Christian faith and moral life. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313 – 386 AD) actually wrote a set of instructions for how people during his time were to be educated in the faith. Adults weren't permitted to rush into baptism unless there was some type of urgent circumstance. Not only did the candidate for baptism need to understand the teachings of Christ and the Church, but he also had to be living by them and attending services regularly. The godparent *ἀνάδοχος* would be responsible for the candidate's continued education in the faith after the person was baptized.

So, how does one fulfil the role of Godparent?

1. It is a gross misunderstanding to think that the only duty of the godparent is to buy a new outfit and a cross for the infant. Of course, this is a beautiful tradition, but the emphasis must be focused on the spiritual. Many times, people are so concerned with the clothing, the cross, the *martyrika*, (witness pins) and the luncheon afterwards, that they forget the magnitude and the awesomeness of the great mystery and the great gift of Holy Baptism. Both the parents and the godparents should be careful not to fall into this trap, but instead to keep their minds focused on the most important aspect and that is the baptism itself.
2. The godparent should make a faithful commitment to join the struggle with the parents, guided by the Church, to bring the godchild carefully and prayerfully along the difficult road to Heaven.
3. If the godparent attends the same parish as the godchild, it's a great blessing for the godparent to accompany their godchild to the Eucharistic chalice each week.
4. A faithful godparent will make every effort to maintain close contact with their godchild, building up their relationship. The main focus is the progress of the child in the knowledge and practice of the Christian life. The godparent should model a Christ-like example at all times. If the godparent lives far away, we are incredibly blessed to live in the 21st century where continued relationships can be maintained through our electronic devices by Skyping and Facetime.
5. Appropriate gift-giving honoring the occasion of the godchild's nameday, birthday or baptism day, could include such things as icons, a Bible, and religious books that will be helpful in building up the spiritual life of the child. When godchildren are especially young, a godparent can mail their godchild a card each week with an encouraging note and a dollar to get a candle at the narthex on Sunday. That child will look forward each week to going to the mailbox to get their card from their godparent...and when they use their dollar for a candle in the narthex, it will be as though you were there with them, teaching them about the light of Christ.
6. Most of all, the greatest duty of the godparent is to pray fervently for their godchild that God will always watch over them and guide them throughout his/her life.
7. Of course, the role and responsibility of the Godparent can be summed up in the Gospel Reading at the baptismal service. ***“Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”***

What a great honor it is to be called upon to be a godparent. May God give each of us the grace to take this role seriously, that we will continue to see the Kingdom of Heaven grow in the lives of our children.

• **GODPARENT SUNDAY**



Godparent Sunday is **THIS Sunday, January 29** and it is sponsored by the Sunday School. We encourage both the young children and the adults to invite their Godparents and/or Godchildren to attend Godparent Sunday

Divine Liturgy. If a Godparent is unable to be there, we encourage kids to adopt someone from our parish for the day.

House Blessings



In keeping up with the tradition of our faith, every January following Theophany Fr. Allan is delighted to come to your house or business to perform a "House Blessing".

The House Blessings will

conclude when Lent begins on Feb 27th. If you wish to have your house or business blessed, **please fill out the form (available on the Secretary's desk) and turn in to Fr. Allan's mail box as quickly as possible.**

☞ **NOTE:** Please don't base the scheduling of your visit on a perceived need to feed Fr. Allan, or give him a stipend, or on whether you feel your house is clean enough. He loves you and just wants you and your house to be blessed. ☞

Sunday's Reading

Click on the link below to read this Sunday's Epistle & Gospel: **Sunday of the Canaanite.**

Epistle Reading:

http://www.goarch.org/chapel/lectionary_view?type=E&code=328&event=845&date=1/29/2017

Gospel Reading:

http://www.goarch.org/chapel/lectionary_view?type=G&code=407&event=845&date=1/29/2017

For Meditation

Sin makes man a coward; but a life in the Truth of Christ makes him bold.
~ St. John Chrysostom

Sunday Service Teams

• **USHER**

January 29: Tony Pettis and Joy Pedersen

Next Sunday: Cleo Constantin and Bob Whitehead

• **READER**

January 29: Jeff Silva

Next Sunday: Sunday School

• **COFFEE HOUR**

January 29: J + K + W

Next Sunday: A + B + C

➤ **NOTE:**

➤ *Coffee Hour teams...*

➤ *please bring a bottle of Half & Half on Sundays.*

➤ *please set up & break down tables & chairs.*

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Join us!



• **PROSFORA OFFERING**

January 29: Presvytera Danita

Next Sunday: Ginny Silva

• **FLOWER MINISTRY**

January 29: Nardina Benjamin

Next Sunday: Ginny Silva

Services & Events

• **TEENS (6TH GRADE & UP)**

Calling all teens to come join us for some fun and entertainment on **Friday, January 27 starting at 6:30 pm.** There will be fun games and fun times... Ping-pong, Board games & Hot Chocolate Bar at Tom Guardino's home: 4825 Croy Road, Morgan Hill, 95037. Please RSVP to Krista or Joey Silva. **Teens will begin meeting for an activity on the last Friday of every month.** If you would like to host the teens in your home on the last Friday of the



month please let Joey or Krista know. You don't need to have a teen to host them.

- **DIVINE LITURGY**

On **Monday, January 30 at 7:00 am** for the Three Hierarchs.

- **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

On **Tuesday, January 31 at 7:00 pm.**

- **THE WHYS OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY CLASS**

On **Wednesday, February 1 at 7:00 pm.**

- **DIVINE LITURGY**

On **Thursday, February 2 at 7:00 am** for the Presentation of Our Lord into the Temple.

- **JOY**



On **Sunday, February 5**, following Sunday School, the kids will meet with Presvytera Danita in the hall, where they will learn how to make

koliva. Kids are encouraged to bring names of departed family members and friends. After we've made the koliva, Fr. Allan will teach the kids about the Church's tradition of memorials. Then we will have a memorial service together. Parents are welcome to join.

Stewardship 2017

As we come to a close with our 2016 pledges we ask that you begin to consider continuing giving of your time and talents to our parish by filling out the New Stewardship Cards for 2017. They have been printed and made available for us. Offer this tangible sign of love for God and for our beloved Saint Basil parish

Please prayerfully fill out a 2017 Stewardship Pledge Card, to support Saint Basil ministries. As our Lord has blessed each of us so generously...so also be generous toward Him. Together, "as coworkers with Him," our beloved parish will thrive, growing in Christ.

Glorify Him!

2017 Calendars

The 2017 St. Basil Calendars may be picked up from the ledge of the Secretary's desk. Happy New Year!

Ministry Opportunities

- **GALA 2017**



SAVE THE DATE and MARK YOUR CALENDARS

September 9 at 5:30 pm The Villages.

Mariah Condos has offered to chair the Gala this year. Thank you, Moriah! We currently have an opportunity for one or more persons to offer their skills, planning and implementing the 2017 Saint Basil Gala. This ministry has been vital in helping our parish fulfil its financial obligations. If you, would like to help by serving our parish please contact Moriah Condos, Annie Agah or Presvytera Danita.

Bookstore

The St. Basil Bookstore is here for your needs. It is stocked with icons and books which will enhance your spiritual growth along with your families and friends. Besides books, we also carry many other Orthodox items such as sensors, vigil lamps, prayer books, prayer ropes to name just a few for both personal or gift-giving purposes. You are encouraged to browse the bookstore after each service or during the secretary's workdays (Tuesday - Thursday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm). Feel free to ask questions. Let us know if you can't find something; maybe we can order it for you.

Prayer Request

Are you sick or will be having surgery? If so, please let the office know and we can include your name on the prayer request list.

Please keep in your prayers:

John Anhari	Giovanni Nitis
Samira Bahous	Nicholas Manis
Levi Blain	Voula Papadatos
Elaine Bracket	George Pettis
Maria Davis	Georgia Photopoulos
Andrew Froumis	Paul Rousseve
Philip Gosvener	Mary Sarcone
Otto Hampel	Joanne Smith
Elaine Honjas	Anna Stavaridis
Alyssa Jimenez	Kristos Stavropoulos
Ron Jimenez	Nicholas Steely
Shamiram Joseph	Nicholai Taranin
Lillian Kawar	Thanasis Theologides
Vasso Koffas	Vickie Wilson
Athena Lofaro	Lena Xydes
May Louie	Nectarios
George Nicholas	George Zambos
Megan Ng	Suzanna Zeitler

Bay Area Events

• FAMILY WELLNESS MINISTRY

The Metropolis is offering a Family Wellness Ministry Program on **February 3 – 4**. See below for more details.



Metropolis of San Francisco
Family Wellness Ministry
"Face to Face ~ Heart to Heart"

Feb. 3-4, 2017, the Family Wellness Ministry (FWM) will be facilitating a **Regional Interactive Leadership Conference** in the Bay Area at **Holy Trinity in San Francisco**.

You will have the opportunity to meet our entire Family Wellness Ministry Team, learn more about this new and dynamic ministry - and how YOU can be a part of it.

Join us to hear from dynamic speakers (George Papageorge, Fr. Tom Tsagalakis, and Fr. Timothy Pavlatos), engage in discussions and experience a conference which is relevant, engaging, and interactive. We will meet at Holy Trinity in San Francisco Feb. 3, Friday Eve. 7-9 p.m., and Feb. 4, Saturday, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.)

For more information and to register for this free conference, please click on our website: www.familywellnessministry.org/conferences

• SUMMER CAMP



Saint Nicholas Ranch, Summer Camp registrations usually fill up by the end of January. So, don't delay, get your kids registered ASAP. You can easily register your kids online by going to the following link:

<http://www.youth.sanfran.goarch.org/editor/summer-camp/>

Let Maria Know...

Let Maria know...



1) if you no longer wish to receive the eBulletin.

2) if you would like to be added to our weekly eBulletin distribution list. Please provide me with your first & last name and email address.

3) if we have your current contact information: name, address, phone number(s) and email address.

You can send an email to Maria at: stbasilchurch@sbcglobal.net or call 408-268-3214 on Tuesday – Thursday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Thank you!

Now Enrolling



Safari Kid has over 30 locations in USA, Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia and India for Preschool and Pre-K Programs. They have an ability-based learning

program committed to helping all students become lifelong learners:

Creative Arts & Literacy
Imaginative Explorations
Phonics & Math
Stem Program
Social/Emotional
Development
Music & Movement
Customized Curriculum

Call 408-600-6031 or visit www.safarikidUSA.com or www.facebook.com/safarikidalmaden to enroll your child today!

Bulletin Deadline

All announcements and articles must be written as you would like them to appear in the bulletin(s). Changes and edits might be made. They must be emailed to: stbasilchurch@sbcglobal.net **BY WEDNESDAY MORNING, 10:00 AM.** Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.
