

Thursday, February 23, 2017

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



Forgiving What We Do Not Know

by Fr. Stephen Freeman

The first service of Great Lent in the Orthodox Church is “Forgiveness Vespers,” served on the eve of Monday of the First Week. There is nothing unusual about the service itself – other than the “rite of forgiveness” appended to it. In this, the priest and the faithful ask forgiveness of one another. Often this is done with mutual prostrations. Each asks the forgiveness of the other. The rite can take time, depending on the number in attendance. When it is complete, the long labors of Lent can begin. Fasting without forgiveness would be a hollow activity. This is a meditation I shared with my parish this week as the

Sunday of Forgiveness approaches:

Perhaps the most generous words spoken by Christ are those we hear from the Cross: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” Taken at face value, the words make little sense. Surely, those who crucified Christ knew that they were killing a man. Surely, they were even aware that his execution was largely political and unjust. The centurion in charge of the crucifixion is said to have stated, “Surely this man was the Son of God.” So how could Christ say, “They do not know what they are doing?”

I believe this goes to the very heart of our lives and actions. We almost never know what we are doing. The greater context, the meaning of anything, is hidden from us. We have children, work at a job, and live our lives, hoping that these have been worthwhile actions. We know that much, even most of what we have done has been tainted with bad intentions and other less-than-worthy motivations. But we never actually grasp the full scope of our actions—even the good things that we do have a hidden side. Did that kind word spoken earlier make a difference? Did that act of charity actually change anything?

This hidden aspect of our lives is an inherent part of the human condition. We simply don’t know what we’re doing. This makes it very hard for us to judge our actions or to weigh them for their value.

Christ’s words are addressed to the Father on behalf of all of humanity, because it is not just the small number of people in Jerusalem who were consenting to His death. His death is “on behalf of all and for all.”

And this brings us to Forgiveness Sunday. “Why do I need to ask forgiveness of others if I have done them no wrong?”

The simple answer is: You don’t know what you have or have not done. But it is commonly understood in Orthodoxy that “each person is responsible for the sins of the whole world.” Our lives are deeply connected—we are never uninvolved in the lives of others. What I have done and what I have not done effects the lives of the whole world. I may have had no direct hand, and yet I cannot excuse myself as if I have no share in what happens everywhere. The world is as we make it.

I once heard a monk say, "The person of prayer does not need to go any further than his own heart to find the source of all violence in the world."

But none of this is to call us to a morbid guilt. It calls us to Christ and calls us to hear His words. On Forgiveness Sunday, each of us asks forgiveness of the others around us. It is both a personal matter and a collective. I have failed and need forgiveness. We have failed and need forgiveness. And perhaps the even greater call comes to us to join ourselves with Christ who says: "Father, forgive them!"

"Forgive me," we say. "God forgives us all," comes the response. It sometimes feels awkward, even embarrassing. Some people begin to weep. Others begin to giggle. Both are part of the human condition within our shame.

But the actions of Forgiveness Sunday unite us necessarily to the actions of Christ. By submitting Himself to crucifixion, Christ put Himself in the place of the sinner, the one needing forgiveness. He was displayed naked, nailed on high for all the world to see, the shame of the whole world.

In the mild social embarrassment of saying, "Forgive me," to another human being, we unite ourselves to the deep, profound healing shame of Christ. And with brazen boldness we confess, "God forgives us all!" uniting ourselves with the priestly cry of Christ Himself, "Father, forgive them!"

And having read this, and done all that, we still will not know what we have done. But we are not saved by knowing what we do. We are saved by doing what He does.



Sunday's Reading

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

Epistle Reading:

http://www.goarch.org/chapel/lectionary_view?type=E&code=268&event=1002&date=2/26/2017

Gospel Reading:

http://www.goarch.org/chapel/lectionary_view?type=G&code=290&event=1002&date=2/26/2017

For Mediation

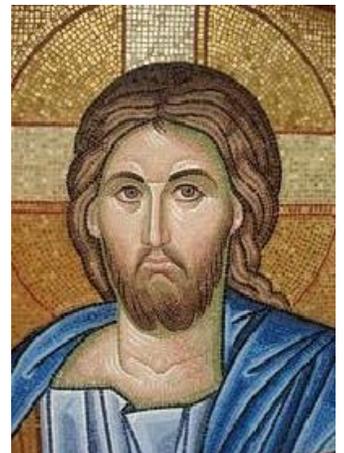
There are three things, my brethren, by which faith stands firm, devotion remains constant, and virtue endures. They are prayer, fasting, and mercy. Prayer knocks at the door; fasting obtains; mercy receives. Prayer, fasting and mercy: these three are one, and give life to one another.

~ *Peter Chrysologus, Bishop of Ravenna*

Since we were wounded by sin, we must treat it with penance. But penance without fasting is worthless. Then by fasting justify yourself before God!
~ *St. Basil the Great*

Saturday of Soul / Soul Saturday

It is traditional to pray for the departed on Saturday as Christ lay dead in the Tomb on Saturday. As Lent begins, the church dedicates this Saturday, **February 25 and March 4** as Saturday of the Soul. On these days, **everyone is invited to attend Divine Liturgy starting at 8:30 am and is encouraged to bring a small bowl of koliva and a list of names of their departed to prayed for**



during the memorial service by father and everyone present. Afterwards, all present go into the hall to share and eat the blessed koliva on behalf of the departed memory.

Flower Donations



Sunday Service Teams

- **WELCOME MINISTRY**
February 26: Mark Judge & Evangelos Spyropoulos
Next Sunday: Tony Pettis and John Anhari
- **READER**
February 26: Brian Davenport
Next Sunday: Sunday School
- **COFFEE HOUR**
February 26: J + K + W
Next Sunday: S
 - **NOTE:**
 - *Coffee Hour teams...*
 - *please bring a bottle of Half & Half on Sundays.*
 - *please set up & break down tables & chairs.*
- **PROSFORA OFFERING**
February 25: Georgia Froumis
February 26, March 1 & 3: Nitsa Sialaris
Next Sunday: Elsie Saba
- **FLOWER MINISTRY**
February 26: Elsie Saba
Next Sunday: Alina Tomescu



• **SUNDAY SCHOOL SNACKS**

February 26: The Jost Family

Next Sunday: The Condos Family

Services & Events

• **THE WHYS OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY CLASS**

No Class. We will be taking a break during Lent to attend Pre-Sanctified Liturgy.

• **SOUL SATURDAY'S**

On Saturday February 25 and March 4 at 8:30 am. Please bring a small bowl of koliva and a list of names of the departed loved ones to be commemorated. If you already have given your list, there is no need to submit them again.

• **FORGIVENESS VESPERS**

See Bay Area Events, below.

• **LENT BEGINS**

On Clean Monday February 27. The Lenten fast begins and will end on Pascha, Sunday, April 16.

• **COMPLINE**

On Monday, February 27 at 7:00 pm.

• **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

On Tuesday, February 28 at 7:00 pm.

• **PRE – SANCTIFIED LITURGY**

On Wednesday, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 7:00 pm.

• **PRE – SANCTIFIED LITURGY**

On Friday, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at 7:00 am.

• **SALUTATIONS TO THE THEOTOKOS**

On Friday, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at 7:00 pm.

• **JOY**

JOY will be meeting on **Sunday, March 5** following Sunday School.

• **LIFE MOVES**

On **Sunday, March 5 at 6:00 pm** we will be serving the meal to the homeless women and children. If you are able to help cook, bake or serve, please contact Rochelle.

• **2017 ST. BASIL GALA**

The 2017 St. Basil Gala will be on **Saturday, September 9 at 5:30 pm** at The Villages.

Congratulations!

Welcome to Orthodoxy!

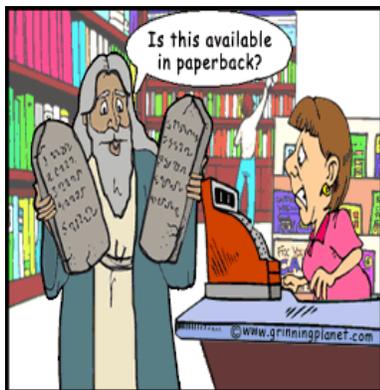
What a joyous event we had last week at our church. Samuel Hage was baptized and chrismated as an Orthodox Christian! AXIOS! – WORTHY!



We also congratulate Greg Howland who is Samuel's godfather.

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.



Stewardship 2017

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!

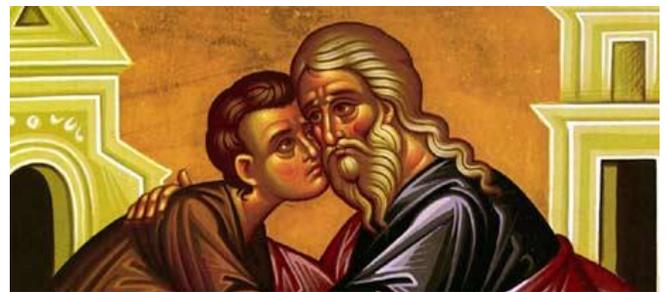
Prayer Request

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. Your name will be on the list for 40 days before it is deleted. If you would like to have your name on the list for more than 40 days, please contact the office after the 40 days has lapsed.

Please keep in your prayers:

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Fr. Jim Foreso | Athena Lofaro |
| Samira Bahous | Giovanni Nitis |
| Philip Gosvener | Lena Xydes |

Bay Area Events



- **BAY AREA FORGIVENESS VESPERS**
With the blessings of His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco, all are invited to begin Great Lent by participating with other Bay Area communities in the Forgiveness Vespers Service on **Sunday, February 26 at 6:00 pm** at **Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, SF**. His Grace Bishop Apostolos of Medeia, Chancellor of the Metropolis of San Francisco, will preside. The homily will be offered by Rev. Father Aris Metrakos. A makaronada reception will follow the service.

- **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/>

• LENTEN RETREAT

The St. Lawrence Community invites everyone to their mini conference on "Take My Hand, Not My Life". For additional information, feel free to call our church office: [831-335-0300](tel:831-335-0300).



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

THE VICARIATE FOR PALESTINIAN / JORDANIAN
CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX COMMUNITIES IN THE USA

"TAKE MY HAND, NOT MY LIFE"

ABORTION AND ITS INFLUENCE

Saturday
March 4, 2017

First Annual
Orthodox
Bioethics
Conference

Hosted by St. Lawrence
Orthodox Christian Church
6192 Highway 9, Felton, CA 95018



08:30-09:00 am	Prayers for the Protection of the Unborn.
09:00-9:30 am	Registration and Coffee.
09:30-10:30 am	1st Session "How Abortion happens and it's Effect on a Woman's body" By Rev. Dr. Father Spyridon Jajeh (Doctor of Pharmacy and Clinical Pharmacist, Adjunct Professor: University of the Pacific's School of Pharmacy) Pastor of Sts. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, Walnut Creek, CA.
10:30-11:30 am	2nd Session "The Spiritual and Psychological Affects of Abortion on the Person and Society" By Very Rev. Fr. Thaddaeus Hardenbrook (MA: Literature, MDiv: Community Studies) Pastor of St. Lawrence Orthodox Church, Felton, CA.
11:30-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30-01:30 pm	3rd Session "Abstinence and The Blessing of Children in a Pro-Abortion Society" By Very Rev. Fr. John A. Peck (Doctor of Ministry). Author, Evangelist, Blogger: Journey to Orthodoxy, Good Guys Wear Black, Preacher's Institute.
01:30-02:00 pm	Final Remarks by Very Rev. Fr. Damaskinos Alazrai, Archimandrite of Ecumenical Throne, PhD (Psychology).

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.

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!