



FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF CHRIST

Quarterly Bulletin of Saint John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church

Diocese of the West - Orthodox Church in America

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Priest Edward Henderson

The Confessing Church

Our Lord Jesus Christ promised that His true disciples would know the truth and that the truth would make them free (John 8:31-32). The Holy Apostle Paul calls the Church the “pillar and ground of the truth.” (1 Tim. 3:15) Throughout her history, the Church has struggled to proclaim to the world the truth about God, about creation, about human nature, about the purpose of our life, about the manner by which we should live, and about our redemption and salvation in Christ. She proclaimed these truths in the face of false teachings, which were often accepted by the majority of the surrounding community.

The Church does not articulate her teachings to gain popularity in this world. She proclaims them for the salvation of the world. For Saint Paul also teaches that God wills that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). Often in history, Orthodox Christians have suffered gravely for the truths of our faith. Despite facing popular ridicule, persecution, imprisonment, torture, and even the most gruesome forms of execution, the saints found true freedom through confessing and living according to the truths revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures and in the life of the Church.

Very recently, hierarchs, clergy, and lay representatives gathered for the All-American Council in Baltimore, MD. According to the statutes of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), these gatherings occur every three years. During these councils, we discuss the life and mission of our Church in North America, we elect candidates to various positions in our church bureaucracy, and, when necessary, elect a new primate if that see is vacant.

This year, prompted by a resolution from many of our clergy, the Holy Synod issued a statement upholding the Church's well-established teaching on marriage, human sexuality, and gender. To summarize, the statements proclaims: 1. Christian marriage is a relationship between one man and one woman, 2. Sexual relationships are blessed by God and by the Church only within a marriage between one man and one woman, 3. God created human beings as either male or female. The Holy Synod's statement calls upon all the faithful- clergy and laity, to abide by and uphold these truths always.

Why would the Holy Synod issue such a decree? Because, our contemporary society has embraced falsehoods that contradict such teachings. Firstly, we are told that all sexual relationships between consenting adults should be accepted and even celebrated. Likewise, marriage can now be between two members of either the opposite or the same sex. Many are now advocating opening the marital relationship to more than two people. At the same time, we are told that there are genders other than male and female, that we must discard any traditional notions of what it means to be a man or woman. Most egregious is the ideology that encourages men and women to live as members of the opposite biological sex, pushing certain people to permanently alter their bodies through cosmetic surgery in order to appear to be other than the gender God ordained for them before they were even born.

Despite the popularity of such teachings, they are soul-destroying. They must be condemned to safeguard the salvation of Christ's flock. Such is why the Holy Synod issued this statement. Let us now, like the saints of old, endure everything for the sake of Our Lord, His Gospel, and His Church, even if we are made social pariahs, even if we too face persecution and suffering for the truth. Let us truly love our neighbors by showing mercy and compassion to all, forgiving those who hate and persecute us, and welcoming all who come to our Church, seeking the truth that will set them free. Let us remember the words of Saint Paul, who after setting forth the sins that exclude us from the Kingdom of Heaven, said: "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11)

Namesdays, Birthdays, and Anniversaries

August 16- Birthday of Boris Gerlovin

August 20- Birthday of Elena Latour

August 26- Namesday of Maxim Tikhomirov

October 13- Anniversary of Fr. Edward's ordination to the priesthood

If you would like your namesday, birthday, and/or anniversary included in the future, please contact Fr. Edward at revedwardhenderson@gmail.com.

Bishop Daniel elected Bishop of Chicago

On Monday, July 18, a few hours before the opening of the 20th All-American Council, the Diocese of the Midwest convened a special assembly, under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, to consider an episcopal nomination following the falling asleep of Archbishop Paul of blessed memory. The Diocesan assembly nominated His Grace Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa who has been serving as Locum Tenens of the Diocese over the last few months. Later that day, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, meeting in a Special Summer 2022 Session under the presidency of Metropolitan Tikhon, canonically elected Bishop Daniel, formerly Bishop of Santa Rosa and Auxiliary to the Diocese of the West, Bishop of Chicago and the Midwest.

Fr. Edward elected to the Diocesan Council

On Wednesday, July 20, the Diocese of the West held its annual assembly at the site of the 20th All American Council in Baltimore, MD. During the assembly, Fr. Edward was elected to the diocesan council. For many years, our parishioner and parish council member, Ivan I. Pouschine, served on the diocesan council.

Upcoming Events

August 14-August 28: Dormition Fast

August 29-September 15: Fr. Edward away on vacation



Schedule of Services

Sundays: Divine Liturgy at 10:00am

Saturdays: Vigil *or* Great Vespers at 5:00pm

August, September, October services

Thursday, August 18		Vespers	6:00pm
Friday, August 19	Transfiguration	Liturgy	10:00am
Saturday, August 27		Vigil	5:00pm
Sunday, August 28	Dormition	Liturgy	10:00am
Tuesday, September 20		Vigil	7:00pm
Wednesday, September 21	Nativity of the Theotokos	Liturgy	7:00am
Monday, September 26		Vigil	7:00pm
Tuesday, September 27	Exaltation of the Cross	Liturgy	7:00am
Thursday, October 13		Vespers	7:00pm
Friday, October 14	Protection of the Theotokos	Liturgy	7:00am

* In connection with Fr. Edward's vacation, Vigil is cancelled on September 3 & 10.

More detailed service schedules are available on the parish website and at the candle desk.

“..how great is the gain of humbleness of mind, and how great the damage of pride. For this, even when conjoined with righteousness and fastings and tithes, fell behind; while that, even when yoked with sin, out-stripped the Pharisee's pair, even although the charioteer it had was a poor one. For what was worse than the publican? But all the same since he made his soul contrite, and called himself a sinner; which indeed he was; he surpassed the Pharisee, who had both fastings to tell of and tithes; and was removed from any vice. On account of what, and through what? Because even if he was removed from greed of gain and robbery, he had rooted over his soul the mother of all evils—vain-glory and pride.” -Saint John Chrysostom