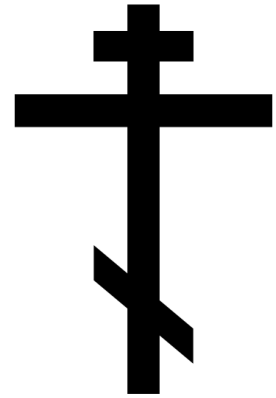


ST. NEKTARIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH

OCTOBER 2012



NEWSLETTER



THE GREATEST DANGER IS LOVE

"In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness..."

"Then it was as if I suddenly saw the secret beauty of their hearts, the depth of their hearts where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in the eyes of the Divine. If only they could all see themselves as they really are. If only we could see each other that way all the time. There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed....I suppose the big problem would be that we would fall down and worship each other."

Thomas Merton wrote these words in his book *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* in 1968. He described this experience as an epiphany, a revelation of love. And this is such a wonderful idea; it is that moment of transformation that we can all imagine, that we can all think about actually happening. The challenge of course is to make it a reality. When we look at our spouse, our neighbor, our boss, or the total stranger, what do we see? Do we see that "secret beauty of their hearts" or do we see the flaws, the short-comings, the shell in which they live? Do we see this person, isolated and individual, or do we see the person caught up in the love of Christ?

The greatest danger of this kind of vision is Love – love for the other, love for the stranger, love for Christ as he is found in each other. That is what Christ offers us as we join ourselves to him: eyes to see and ears to hear. Glory to Jesus Christ!

Fr. David

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Questions? Ask Fr David!



ST. NEKTARIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH

October 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	<u>1</u> <i>Protection of the Theotokos</i>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> Vespers 6:30	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> Confession 5:30 Great Vespers 6:30 <i>St. Innocent</i>
<u>7</u> Divine Liturgy 9:30	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> Vespers 6:30	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u> Confession 5:30 Great Vespers 6:30
<u>14</u> Divine Liturgy 9:30	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u> Vespers 6:30	<u>18</u> <i>Holy Apostle & Evangelist Luke</i>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u> Confession 5:30 Great Vespers 6:30
<u>21</u> Divine Liturgy 9:30	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u> Vespers 6:30	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u> Confession 5:30 Great Vespers 6:30
<u>28</u> Divine Liturgy 9:30	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u> Vespers 6:30	1	2	3

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Today the faithful celebrate the feast with joy
illuminated by your coming, O Mother of God.
Beholding your pure image we fervently cry to you:
"Encompass us beneath the precious veil of your protection;
deliver us from every form of evil by entreating Christ,
your Son and our God that He may save our souls."

~ Troparion for the Protection of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary

The Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

O Lord, grant that I may meet the coming day in peace.
Help me in all things to rely upon Your Holy Will.
In every hour of the day, reveal Your will to me.
Bless my dealings with all who surround me.
Teach me to treat all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul,
and with the firm conviction that Your will governs all.
In all my deeds and words, guide my thoughts and feelings.
In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all are sent by You.
Teach me to act firmly and wisely, without embittering and embarrassing others.
Give me the strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day with all that it shall bring.
Direct my will.
Teach me to pray.
Pray You Yourself in me.
Amen.

~

Often times in life, we are more concerned with understanding **why** trouble happens than with preparing ourselves with **how** to engage that trouble. We even may have the habit of expecting our lives to be free from trouble. Of course, when we find that trials are common and even to be expected we may become disillusioned or question where God is in all of this. Our faith as Orthodox Christians offers us a very practical way of dealing with troubles and sorrows, even tragedies if we allow it. It is an active way; it is a way that allows no room for reaction or impulse. It is simply prayer.

I have struggled with the reasons for prayer for a very long time. I have wondered why I should pray when nothing ever happens. I believe this is familiar to a lot of people. If I have learned anything it is that questioning and wondering are acceptable, even natural. But I have also learned that obedience and acceptance to what the Church teaches opens up new avenues of thinking, new attitudes, new perspectives. The Church asks us to pray. The wisdom of all those who have gone before us is that by allowing a life of prayer to blossom within our own day-to-day lives, we will be transformed, we will be healed, we will be renewed. In Scripture we read over and over again that Christ departed to pray by himself. He constantly sought places and times to be in intentional prayer. But why? Did his suffering end? No, it increased. Did he get something he wanted? No, he lost everything. Did he change God's mind? No, he relinquished his own human will. But what he gained far exceeded the loss. He found peace and simplicity; he found trust and ultimately, he became Love in its fullest sense.

The prayer above was made famous by St. Philaret of Moscow and is commonly used in daily morning prayers. It is both a comfort and a challenge to us as Christians. To pray, "In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all are sent by You" calls us to greater and greater faith. And it prepares us and transforms us so that we are no longer victims but we become empowered to "bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things" (1 Cor. 13:7). This is the life Christ came to give us. And if we embrace it, it is the life that will save us.

Who We Are... St. Nektarios Orthodox Church is a mission of the Orthodox Church in America in Waxahachie, Texas. We are located at 208 West Franklin Street in downtown Waxahachie, TX near the historic square. We are in the process of purchasing property and building a new home in which to worship and to minister to the local community. For information, please contact Fr. David Bozeman at 816-509-6411 or at frdbozeman@gmail.com. You can also receive updates through our website www.stnektariosdfw.org or through social media at <http://www.facebook.com/SaintNektariosMission>. Christ is in our midst!