



ST. GEORGE *Chronicle*

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020



The Very Rev. Christopher Morris
Pastor

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

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The Cross, The Preserver of the Universe

by Saint John Maximovitch

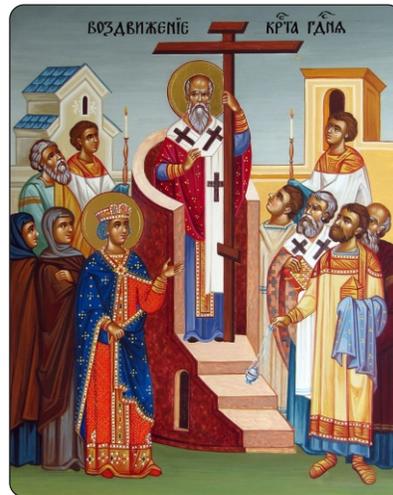
In the prophet Ezekiel (9:6) it is said that when the Angel of the Lord was sent to punish and destroy the sinning people, it was told him not to strike those on whom the "mark" had been made. In the original text this mark is called "tau," the Hebrew letter corresponding to the letter "T," which is how in ancient times the cross was made, which then was an instrument of punishment.

And so, even then was foretold the power of the Cross, which preserves those who venerate it. Likewise by many other events in the Old Testament the power of the Cross was indicated. Moses, who held his arms raised in the form of a cross during the battle, gave victory to the Israelites over the Amalekites. He also, dividing the Red Sea by a blow of his rod and by a transverse blow uniting the waters again, saved Israel from Pharaoh, who drowned in the water, while Israel crossed over on the dry bottom (Exodus, Chs. 14, 17).

Through the laying on of his hands in the form of a cross on his grandsons, Jacob gave a blessing to his descendants,

foretelling at the same time their future until the coming of the "expectation of the nations" (Genesis, Ch. 48).

By the Cross, the Son of God having become man, accomplished our salvation. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross (Phil. 2:8). Having stretched out His hands upon the Cross, the Saviour with them, as it were, embraced the world, and by His blood shed on it, like a king with red ink, He signed the forgiveness of the human race.



The Cross of the Lord was the instrument by which He saved the world after the fall into sin. Through the Cross, He descended with His soul into hell so as to raise up from it the souls who were awaiting Him. By the Cross, Christ

opened the doors of paradise which had been closed after our first ancestors had been banished from it. The Cross was sanctified by the Body of Christ which was nailed to it when He gave Himself over to torments and death for the salvation of the world, and it itself was then filled with life-giving power. By the Cross on Golgotha,

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the prince of this world was cast out (John 12:31) and an end was put to his authority. The weapon by which he was crushed became the sign of Christ's victory.

The demonic hosts tremble when they see the Cross, for by the Cross the kingdom of hell was destroyed. They do not dare to draw near to anyone who is guarded by the Cross.

The whole human race, by the death of Christ on the Cross, received deliverance from the authority of the devil, and everyone who makes use of this saving weapon is inaccessible to the demons.

When legions of demons appeared to St. Anthony the Great and other desert-dwellers, they guarded themselves with the Sign of the Cross, and the demons vanished.

When they appeared to Saint Symeon the Stylite, who was standing on his pillar, what seemed to be a chariot to carry him to heaven, the Saint, before mounting it, crossed himself; it disappeared and the enemy, who had hoped to cast down the ascetic from the height of his pillar, was put to shame.

One cannot enumerate all the separate examples of the manifestation of the power of the Cross in various incidents. Invisibly and unceasingly there gushes from it the Divine grace that saves the world. The Sign of the Cross is made at all the Mysteries and prayers of the Church. With the making of the Sign of the Cross over the bread and wine, they become the Body and Blood of Christ.



With the immersion of the Cross, the waters are sanctified. The Sign of the Cross looses us from sins. "When we are guarded by the Cross, we oppose the enemy, not fearing his nets and barking."



Just as the flaming sword in the hands of the Cherubim barred the entrance into paradise of old, so the Cross now acts invisibly in the world, guarding it from perdition.

The Cross is the unconquerable weapon of pious kings in the battle with enemies. Through the apparition of the Cross in the sky, the dominion of Emperor Constantine was confirmed and an end was put to the persecution against the Church. The apparition of the Cross in the sky in Jerusalem in the days of Constantius the Arian proclaimed the victory of Orthodoxy.

By the power of the Cross of the Lord, Christian kings reign and will reign until Antichrist, barring his path to power and restraining lawlessness (Saint John Chrysostom, Commentary on 11 Thes. 2:6-7).

The "sign of the Son of Man" (Matt. 24:30), that is, the Cross, will appear in the sky in order to proclaim the end of the present world and the coming of the eternal Kingdom of the Son of God. Then all the tribes of the earth shall weep, because they loved the present age and its lusts, but all who have endured persecution for righteousness and called on the name of the Lord shall rejoice and be glad. The Cross then will save from eternal perdition all who conquered temptations by the Cross, who crucified their flesh with its passions and lusts, and took up their cross and followed their Christ.

But those who hated the Cross of the Lord and did not engrave the Cross in their soul will perish forever. For "the Cross is the preserver of the whole universe, the Cross is the beauty of the Church, the Cross is the might of kings, the Cross is the confirmation of the faithful, the Cross is the glory of angels and the scourge of demons" (Monday Matins).



SOURCE: oca.org

Eat Less, Talk Less, Pray More, and Give More

* * * * *

“Pray for the purification of every human being, in order to imitate the angelic way in your life.

Yes, the angels do not pray for themselves. This is how I pray for people, for the Church, for the Body of Christ. When you pray for the Church, you are released from your passions. When you glorify, your soul is relieved and sanctified by divine grace. I want you to learn this art.”

– St. Porphyrios

* * * * *

NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS



Feast Day - September 8

“It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos, ever-blessed, and all-blameless, and the Mother of our God.

More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare, than the Seraphim. Thou, who without corruption didst bear God the Word, and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.”

Liturgy of Bedtime

by Albert Rossi, Ph.D., St. Vladimir's Seminary

One of the more regular times of "Letting the children come" to God is bedtime. Often stories and prayers at bedtime can be relaxed, non-competitive time with children. When everything is right, bedtime can be a time when the unconditional love of parent for child is almost tangible. Children are usually tired and sometimes less frenetic. It also goes without saying that some nights seem more like thinly veiled chaos. But, hopefully, most nights are more peaceful.

Going to sleep for children happens gracefully only within an elaborate ritual. This is the liturgy of going to sleep and is not totally unlike other liturgies. Father Alexander Schmemmann spoke of the Eucharist beginning with the long ritual of getting dressed for Church and continuing through the trip to Church and all the beautiful liturgy preceding Communion. In a similar way, children go to sleep after intricate ceremony. This usually includes taking a bath, putting on pajamas, brushing their teeth, kissing everyone in the household goodnight, hearing a story, saying prayers, getting tucked in, and for little ones, a Linus blanket and Teddy for special security. This is the liturgy of bedtime. It's a tender time,



a loving time. It's a rare and precious time. It's a time to be close to each other and to God.

There are many ways to talk to children about God at bedtime. As was said, we do this primarily by the way we put them to bed. We do this by mustering patience as our own busy day comes to an end. We do it with a tender kiss and an "I love you" as we leave the room. But, we can also do it with stories.

Children love stories, stories, stories. In our family there is one type of story which is the regular, nightly request. It takes the form of "Daddy (or Mommy), tell me a story about when you were a little boy." This has been going on so long that I am running dry of stories, or so it seems. Rather than forego a story, Beth will beg for a re-run of some oft-told story. I have overheard her telling these stories to her little friends as they played in her room. As I get older I am beginning to appreciate this form of story more. It tells of heritage, of lineage, of roots. Inevitably, these stories involve grandparents, moments of virtue, of relatives, humor, tales of Church events. All this is a remembrance of God's activity in one's personal history, and can occasionally be explained as such. Grandparents can have an incalculable value in strengthening the faith of a child with stories about "When Baba [grandmother] was a little girl."



SOURCE: antiochian.org

 Birthdays

September 4
Amy Hadley

September 10
Alexis Hadley

September 17
Kollins Maloley

September 23
Darren Theesen

September 27
Amanda Denny



September 1
Steve & Danielle Wolf

September 2
Don & Connie Schmoll

September 24
Torri & Jared McCracken

October 3
Chris & Katrina Browne

October 4
Varthie & LeeAnn Eliakis

October 15
Zane & Amanda Williamson

October 21
Drew & Sarah Fothergill

October 23
Josh & Amber Hartley

October 28
William & Kathy Suleiman



 Birthdays

October 1
LeeAnn Eliakis

October 3
Tim Shada

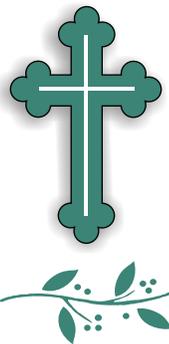
October 12
Fr. Christopher
Kim Rehtus

October 13
Joseph Morris

October 15
Albert Dimitrie Neamu
Gabriella Morris

October 19
Rocky Steinbrink

October 25
Dora Brailita



Where love is, there is Christ

– Love – and humility exists, the Grace of God takes up permanent residence, God reigns, and the earth is ultimately transformed into Paradise.



Where love and humility are absent, there the devil – the enemy – takes up his abode and people live in hell with the devil already in this life, continually worsening their place in the next life, in the eternal fire.

– Saint Paisios the Athonite



Donations

Gratefully Received

Donation to the **Chronicle newsletter** from anonymous donor

Donation to **Burn The Mortgage Fundraiser** in honor of August birthdays from anonymous donor



Several donations to **Saint George Memorial fund** in memory of *Nimir Maloley* from donors

Donation to **Saint George Memorial fund** in memory of *Betty Patsios* from Mark and Joanie Klein

May God bless you all for your generosity!

When you feel that you are falling into confusion or despair, stop yourself immediately and repent of it, as you would for a sin, and get back on your feet.



– Elder Sergei of Vanves



From our Archives . . .



When you're overloaded with the news of the day, take time to delight in simple joys. The editor wanted to share this photo to make you smile. Look at these faces and the love each of these precious ones still bring to Saint George! Can you name them?

"All the Saints are our helpers, but above all is the Theotokos. She has the riches of great compassion. She has great love for mankind, especially for sinners. For this reason she never ceases to mediate to her Son, and the Son takes great joy when His mother intercedes on behalf of mankind. For this reason He brought us His mother and granted her to us that we may have her as a source of salvation."

– St. Anthimos of Chios



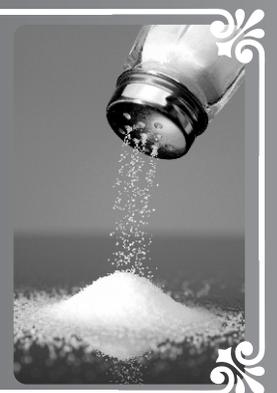
Let us hear from you.
We welcome
your comments, ideas,
photos and any info
you would like to share
with your
St. George family.

Send additions or corrections to:
stgeorgechronicle@yahoo.com



As salt is needed
for all kinds of food,
so humility is needed
for all kinds
of virtues.

– St. Isaac the Syrian



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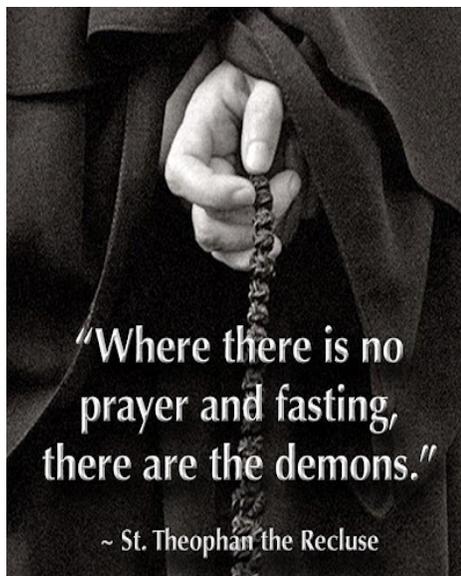
Church website:
www.saintgeorgekearney.com

OUR FASTING DISCIPLINE FOR SEPTEMBER



The traditional fasting
from meats, poultry, fish,
eggs, and dairy products is
observed on Wednesdays and
Fridays.

September 14th, is **The Exaltation
of the Precious and Life-giving
Cross**. This day is a strict fast day.



Why Softener of Evil Hearts?



The origins of the icon are unclear, though it appears to come from South-Western Russia in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Just as Christ would be pierced with nails and a spear, so the soul of Mary would be pierced by sorrow and pain in the heart, when she saw her Son's suffering. After that, the heretofore hidden thoughts of the people regarding the Messiah would be revealed, and they would face a choice: to be with Christ, or against Him. Thus, Simeon's prophecy is completely fulfilled: *"Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."*

For those who cannot help but be moved by the sufferings of Christ for us, and the sufferings of Mary as His earthly mother, **contemplation of the Lord's Passion guides their prayers**. Thinking on the Passion, they are unable to condemn their enemies in prayer; it's impossible because the words of Our Lord on the Cross **"forgive them..."** resonate too strongly.

The same is true when we contemplate the Mother of God's sufferings, which are immeasurably deeper than any pain we receive from those who offend us. Indeed, very often the insults we receive are embarrassingly slight in comparison.

Icons provide a focus for these meditations, as our minds are wont to produce images if none are present. And so, the **"Softener of Evil Hearts"** is the Icon the wisdom of the Church recommends we pray in front of to dispel anger against our enemies. It is discovered that when Christians pray for their enemies before such icons, their feelings of enmity are softened, and that internecine strife and hatreds abate, giving way to kindness. When we pray before such an icon we are not accusing our enemy of evil, but confessing the evil in our own hearts, and asking for help.

source: oca.org

6 Times to Make the Sign of the Cross in the Car

When you get in the car...

...for fair weather and safe travel.

When you pass a Church...

...to honor your God and Savior.

When you pass a Cemetery or Funeral...

...to remember the departed.

When you see or hear an Ambulance...

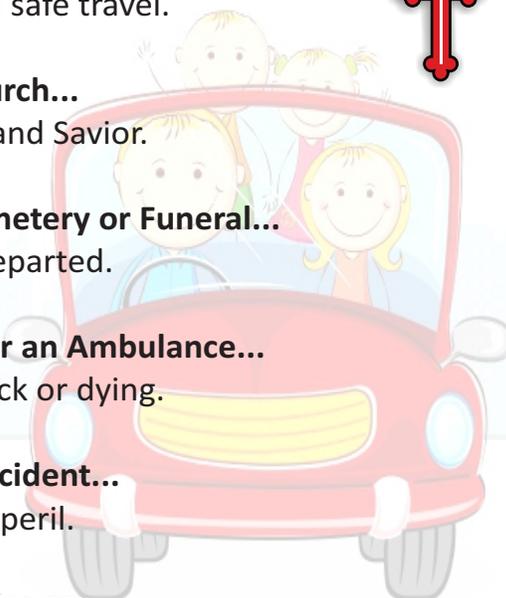
...to strengthen the sick or dying.

When you pass an accident...

...to comfort those in peril.

When you pass a police car...

...to protect them (and to avoid a ticket).



"And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." Acts 11:26