

ST. NICHOLAS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

كنيسة القديس نيقولاوس الانطاكية الأرثوذكسية

80 de Castelnau Est, Montreal, QC, H2R 1P2

+Rev. Fr. Mark-Arsenius Wyatt (Pastor)

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REGULAR SCHEDULE OF WORSHIP:

Saturdays: Great Vespers 7:00pm-8:00pm

Confession 8:00pm-9:00pm (by Appointment only)

Sundays: 9:00am-12:00pm

(9:00am Orthros & 10:30am Divine Liturgy)

Agape Coffee Hour 12:00pm-2:00pm

(No official coffee hour during the summer)

BULLETIN: JULY 3, 2016 A.D.

**** IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT THIS SUNDAY ****

This Bulletin is only available before you online, and was not printed, as our Church is not open this Sunday.

When I went on my pilgrimage to Mt. Athos in February, I surprisingly had much difficulty in finding a substitute Priest for those 2 Sundays. I ended up being able to book Fr. Boulos Khayat, even though he was originally scheduled to be at St. George Church for one of those Sundays. So at that time, I made sure to pre-book with Fr. Boulos for this Sunday in July also, because I knew I would be attending the PLC in Utica.

All was going as planned until last week, Fr. Boulos was suddenly appointed by H.E. Metropolitan JOSEPH to be the new Pastor of St. Ignatius Church in Windsor, Ontario - starting this Sunday!! I was not successful in finding another substitute Priest with last-minute notice, and being the long Canada Day weekend didn't help either. After discussing this with our Parish Council Chairman, Gerry Shadeed, we both decided that due to the circumstances, we will not open the Church this Sunday.

I will mention that this is NOT an unheard-of situation in our Archdiocese: In some cities where there are no other Orthodox Churches or no extra substitute Priests available, the Church will simply be closed until the Pastor returns. Our Diocese ends the PLC on Sunday, but in other Dioceses, it ends on Saturday instead of Sunday, so all the Clergy are back home in their own parishes to not face this difficulty with finding a substitute.

Therefore, enjoy your Sunday off! I do still encourage you to visit another Orthodox Church, or to even take a drive up to Lachute and visit our dear Nuns, and enjoy the scenery, fresh air & monastic hospitality!

Happy Canada Day & see you NEXT Sunday, God willing! **(Fr. Mark)**

THE HOLY EPISTLE (Romans 2:10-16)

Brethren, glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

يَا إِخْوَةَ، مَجْدٌ وَكَرَامَةٌ وَسَلَامٌ لِكُلِّ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ الصَّلَاحَ الْيَهُودِيَّ أَوَّلًا ثُمَّ الْيُونَانِيَّ. لِأَنَّ لَيْسَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مُحَابَاةً. لِأَنَّ كُلَّ مَنْ أَخْطَأَ بِدُونِ النَّامُوسِ فَبِدُونِ النَّامُوسِ يَهْلِكُ وَكُلُّ مَنْ أَخْطَأَ فِي النَّامُوسِ فَبِالنَّامُوسِ يُدَانَ. لِأَنَّ لَيْسَ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ النَّامُوسَ هُمْ أَبْرَارٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَلِ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ بِالنَّامُوسِ هُمْ يُبْرَرُونَ. لِأَنَّهُ الْأُمَّمُ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ عِنْدَهُمُ النَّامُوسُ مَتَى فَعَلُوا بِالطَّبِيعَةِ مَا هُوَ فِي النَّامُوسِ فَهَؤُلَاءِ إِذْ لَيْسَ لَهُمُ النَّامُوسُ هُمْ نَامُوسٌ لِأَنفُسِهِمُ الَّذِينَ يُظْهِرُونَ عَمَلَ النَّامُوسِ مَكْتُوبًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ شَاهِدًا أَيْضًا ضَمِيرُهُمْ وَأَفْكَارُهُمْ فِيمَا بَيْنَهَا مُشْتَكِيَةٌ أَوْ مُحْتَجَّةٌ فِي الْيَوْمِ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَدِينُ اللَّهُ سَرَائِرَ النَّاسِ حَسَبَ إِنْجِيلِي بِيسوعِ الْمَسِيحِ.

THE HOLY GOSPEL (St. Matthew 4:18-23)

At that time, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed him. And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

فِي ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ فِيمَا كَانَ يسوعُ مَاشِيًا عِنْدَ بَحْرِ الْجَلِيلِ أَبْصَرَ أَخَوَيْنِ: سَمْعَانَ الَّذِي يُقَالُ لَهُ بُطْرُسُ ، وَأَنْدَرَاوَسَ أَخَاهُ يُلْقِيَانِ شَبَكَةً فِي الْبَحْرِ ، فَإِنَّهُمَا كَانَا صَيَّادَيْنِ. فَقَالَ لَهُمَا: ((هَلُمَّ وَرَائِي فَأَجْعَلْكُمْ صَيَّادِي النَّاسِ)). فَلِلْوَقْتِ تَرَكَمَا الشَّبَاكَ وَتَبِعَاهُ. ثُمَّ اجْتَاَزَ مِنْ هُنَاكَ فَرَأَى أَخَوَيْنِ آخَرَيْنِ: يَعْقُوبَ بَنَ زَبْدِي وَيُوحَنَّا أَخَاهُ فِي السَّفِينَةِ مَعَ زَبْدِي أَبِيهِمَا يُصْلِحَانِ شَبَاكَهُمَا ، فَدَعَاهُمَا. فَلِلْوَقْتِ تَرَكَمَا السَّفِينَةَ وَأَبَاهُمَا وَتَبِعَاهُ. وَكَانَ يسوعُ يَطُوفُ كُلَّ الْجَلِيلِ يُعَلِّمُ فِي مَجَامِعِهِمْ ، وَيَكْرِزُ بِبِشَارَةِ الْمَلَكُوتِ ، وَيَشْفِي كُلَّ مَرَضٍ وَكُلَّ ضَعْفٍ فِي الشَّعْبِ.

Arrow Prayers: Short Prayers used in Personal Devotion

By: Abbot Tryphon, All-Merciful Orthodox Monastery, Vashon Island - Washington

Many Church Fathers taught the use of the "arrow prayer", deliberately short prayers for personal devotion that were easily remembered, and could communicate one's love for God, while seeking His help. They were like arrows being shot into the air, wholeheartedly demonstrating our sincerity in asking God's help. One of my personal favorites is an arrow prayer attributed to Saint Gregory Palamas. "Lord enlighten my darkness, Lord enlighten my darkness, Lord enlighten my darkness....." This is the perfect prayer when seeking God's help in keeping His commandments, and doing battle with habitual sins. By this prayer we are asking that grace abound and transformation take place. It is a prayerful plea for God's mercy, and that He make us holy by coming quickly to our aid. It is the perfect prayer to utter at the very moment we are receiving the Holy Mysteries of Christ's Body and Blood, the hot coals that burn within and bring about healing of body and soul, and illumine our heart. It is a prayer in which we confess before God that we are living in a state of darkness, and asking Him to dispel all that darkness which keeps us from attaining holiness, and communing with Him. "There is no need at all to make long discourses; it is enough to stretch out one's hands and say, "Lord, as you will, and as you know, have mercy." And if the conflict grows fiercer say, "Lord, help!" He knows very well what we need and he shews us his mercy (Saint Macarius the Great)."

+ The Jesus Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me! +

The Priest is the Guardian of the Holy Chalice - A pastoral explanation by Fr. Mark

Once in a while you might see me politely instruct someone in the Communion line to kiss the Holy Chalice and take a piece of bread from the basket without having given him Holy Communion. You might also hear me remind the congregation right before Holy Communion that we must believe that this is the actual Body & Blood of Christ to receive it, and we must be spiritually prepared and in communion with the Orthodox Church to receive the Eucharist, lest we condemn ourselves by an unworthy partaking. And there are other times you might see me take the Holy Chalice back into the Holy Altar in order to kneel on the ground and lick Holy Communion off of the floor - that happens when there is an accident, usually with children or the elderly, when the Holy Communion falls out of the person's mouth onto the floor. - It is the Priest's responsibility to eat it off the floor and to not allow the person to pick it up or to have people step on it. This is all because the Priest is the guardian of the Holy Chalice. They are not strange ideas from my own head! I am expected to know my sheep, and I am instructed in our **Archdiocese Clergy Guide** to give these reminders and even I will even quote: "The bulletin should carry a notice at all times informing visitors that only Orthodox Christians may receive the Eucharist. — A visitor who is non-Orthodox who approaches the Chalice should be given a piece of the Antidoron Bread. — According to the guidance of one's father confessor and his advice, one may approach the Chalice. — The Priest must administer the Eucharist using only one spoon."

Among other directions, I am to make sure, to the best of my ability and discernment, that the person approaching the Holy Chalice is not going to harm himself and that no type of irreverence be brought to the Holy Eucharist, even if the irreverence is not intended by the person. **Now what do I mean by that?** For example: If someone approaches and I see him chewing gum, I am not going to instruct him to remove the gum from his mouth and then put it back in after receiving. I would be careless to do that, and I have seen it happen! Instead, that person needs to be spoken to by the Priest (afterwards) that we do not chew gum before or after receiving Holy Communion. It is irreverent and as gum is usually spit out, perhaps a small particle or drop of Holy Communion -absorbed by the gum- also gets spit out! **Another example:** if someone is feeling nauseous in the Communion line, he should not receive Holy Communion at that time because he might vomit everything out into the toilet or on the floor. We are also not supposed to smoke before/after receiving Holy Communion because it is harmful to the body, but also because it usually causes one to cough-up and spit out phlegm. What irreverence to see a man coughing & spitting on the Church lawn with a cigarette in his hand, after just receiving Holy Communion shortly before. All of these situations need special attention, not because they are rules to follow, but more importantly because we need to **develop a sense of reverence** when approaching Holy & spiritual matters!

On the note about spitting-up and vomiting: I have been questioned before as to why I would choose not to administer Holy Communion to someone in the hospital? There are **3 cases** where a Priest cannot and should not administer Holy Communion in the hospital setting. 1) The patient must not be in a coma, he must be awake and aware of what he is partaking. 2) The patient must be able to swallow, so when there are tubes going down his throat, it is impossible to swallow. And we do not simply wet one's lips with Holy Communion either, it must be consumed and swallowed. 3) The patient needs to swallow and keep the Holy Communion down. Like explained above, if the patient is coughing heavily and spitting up anything going into the mouth into a bundle of kleenex (very common), the Priest should not administer Holy Communion, because he knows quite well that it will end up in the kleenex and eventually into the garbage. **I have dealt with all 3 of these cases, and I found that relatives mostly get offended simply because they are not aware that we do not even practice "Last Rites" in the Orthodox Church!** Receiving Holy Communion is a life-long practice and not specifically reserved for the hospital visit or death-bed. If the person qualifies to receive Holy Communion while hospitalized, then so-be-it. But if their physical condition does not allow the Priest to administer Holy Communion, the patient is not at fault, nor is the Priest to be blamed, nor is the patient lost in limbo or damned if he dies before receiving Holy Communion in better health. Our Lord's Body & Blood should already be a part of our own flesh & blood by living a sacramentally-active Orthodox lifestyle, and that is why attending the Divine Liturgy EVERY Sunday is so important.

Don't delay your invitation to the Lord's Table! And don't blame the Priest, he is ordained to be the guardian of the Holy Chalice, and will be held accountable by God who bestowed him with the Holy Priesthood. **Don't delay!**

Take a vacation, but don't take a vacation from God!

A friendly summer reminder to parishioners by Fr. Mark

Schools are out and vacation time begins. Our Church attendance will naturally drop over the summer months while you enjoy your well-deserved family time and our long-awaited hot weather. I do want to remind you what was already recommended in the past by H.E. Metropolitan JOSEPH, that even on our vacation, we should still try to find an Orthodox Church wherever we are on Sunday, so we are not separated from our worship even while having fun, and our vacation can include a type of pilgrimage. I completely agree with that advice, and I also completely understand that in some places there simply are no Orthodox Churches. In that case, you can at least try to set aside some time for your spiritual life by making sure you recite your daily prayers and perhaps by reading from the Holy Gospel and a spiritual book. **Forgot to pack books? Recite the Jesus Prayer! (Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me).** Focus on the Lord who created Heaven and earth, and then get your tan while remembering Who lit up the sun, and Who covered the land with that nice 'blue' water you are enjoying. Take a vacation, but don't take a vacation from God! And for those who are taking vacation at home, and not travelling anywhere, but have the habit of avoiding Church services all summer long: You are not helping yourself by doing that. Does it make sense to eat healthy and exercise all year long, only to eat junk food and slack-off the entire summer? I do understand that sometimes summer plans conflict with your Sunday morning...but all summer long?? (and all year long, for some!!). We need to preserve our Orthodox practice of receiving Holy Communion regularly (with preparation) and keep it as something essential and important, and not just something I do when I go to Church, and if I ever visit the Church.

Even on our civil work calendar, Sunday is still the first day of the week during the summer (on the left side of the page, right before Monday) - it's the Lord's Day - and it is recorded in the Holy Gospel that on the first day of the week (Sunday), the Disciples met and received the Holy Eucharist (Holy Communion). They kept that day sacred because the Lord rose from the dead early on the first day of the week. So essentially, we are starting our week by going to Church and receiving the Lord's Holy Body & Blood, just like the Disciples did. Saturday remains the Sabbath, the day of rest, the 7th day. We commemorate our departed on that day and when our Lord descended into Hades. God rested on the Sabbath. That is the real weekend, but Sunday is in fact the start of our new week!

The Canons of the Church even warn that if a believer (Clergy included) skips Holy Communion for 3 consecutive Sundays, he is considered cut-off from the Church! Now, I don't know of any parish that actually enforces that rule today, but the model should still stay in our mind that Holy Communion is important. There are preparations for Holy Communion, and one should not just approach the Chalice out of routine, without care. However, one must also not leave himself in a state of never being prepared to receive Holy Communion, as if never putting the effort to approach the Holy Chalice, so always being in the state of unprepared just to canonically excuse myself - that is heretical and delusional! **God knows the heart, and these rules were made to help us get closer to Him, not to keep us apart!** He tells us that unless we eat His flesh and drink His blood, we have no life in us! Don't become a summer zombie, living, but not alive in Him - just wandering around eating & entertaining ourselves.

This summer, please enjoy yourself. Enjoy your family-time. Enjoy relaxing at home and catching up on your landscaping and gardening. But just remember that God does not take a vacation from you. There is always an Orthodox Church offering the Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning somewhere near you. The summer goes by so fast, don't let Sunday just be another day of the week. Don't let attending Church be the result of your cancelled rainy golf day or BBQ. Let attending the Divine Liturgy be a part of your summer vacation to the best of your ability. Perhaps during the year, families cannot attend Church together due to work/school - overtime & exams - let the summer months be the time to finally come to Church as a family, then go to lunch together.

**God is not the fun-police or a rainy cloud...and the Church is not programmed to ruin your vacation!
Take your vacation from secularism, but don't take a vacation from your spirituality!**