

:: Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev ::
On Prayer, part II: Prayer as Dialogue

Last week we began a series of articles on prayer, originally given as talks on Russian TV in 1999. Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk is head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations.

Prayer is a dialogue. It includes not only our own turning towards God, but also the response of God Himself. As in every dialogue, in prayer it is important not only to speak out and express oneself, but also to listen to the response. God's response does not always come directly in the minutes of prayer; sometimes it happens somewhat later. It can happen, for example, that we ask God for immediate help, but it only comes after several hours or days. But we understand that it took place because we asked God for help in prayer.

Through prayer we can learn a great deal about God. When praying, it is very important to be prepared for what God reveals to us; but He can prove to be other than we had imagined Him. Often we make the mistake of approaching God with our own ideas about Him, and these ideas can obscure from us the real image of the Living God, which God Himself can reveal to us. Often people create in their own minds a kind of idol and then pray to this idol. This dead, artificially created idol becomes an obstacle or barrier between the Living God and us people. "Make yourself a false image of God and try praying to him. Make yourself an image of an unmerciful and cruel Judge, and try praying to Him with confidence and love," remarked Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh. Thus, we should be ready for God to reveal Himself as different than we had imagined Him. Therefore, approaching prayer, one needs to abandon all images that our human imagination and fantasy produce.

God's response can take place in different ways, but prayer is never unrequited. If we do not hear a response, it means that something is not right in us ourselves; it means that we have not yet sufficiently tuned ourselves to the right way for encountering God.

There is an instrument called a tuning fork, used for tuning pianos; this device gives the clear sound of an "A." The strings of the piano must be strung in such a way that the sound they produce is in strict accordance with the sound of the tuning fork. As long as the "A" string is not sufficiently taut, no matter how many times you hit the keys, the tuning fork will remain silent. But the moment the string reaches the necessary degree of tension, the tuning fork – a lifeless piece of metal – will suddenly begin to sound. Having adjusted the one "A" string, the master can then configure this "A" in the other octaves (in a piano each key strikes several strings, creating a special surround sound). Then he can set the "B," "C," and so forth, one octave after another, until finally the entire instrument will be configured in accordance with the tuning fork.

So it must be with us in prayer. We should tune into God, adjusting our entire life – all the strings of our soul – to Him. When we adjust our life to God; when we learn to fulfill His commandments; when the Gospel becomes our moral and spiritual law; and when we learn to live in accordance with God's commandments, then we begin to feel how the soul responds to the presence of God in prayer, just as a tuning fork responds to an perfectly stretched string.

Source: www.pravmir.com

Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andrew, by email or phone.



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June 1, 2014 – Sunday after the Ascension The Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea

Matins (Morning Prayer), 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
Holy Bread and Coffee Hour: Mitch and Marion Kaleel

At the end of today's Liturgy, we are pleased to commemorate the 50th wedding anniversary of Ron and Dottie Malooley, and the 25th of John and Melanie Thompson. May God grant them many more years!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 6):

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb. And the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Troparion of the Ascension (Tone 4):

Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy Disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit, having become confident of the blessing. Verily, Thou art the Son of God, and Deliverer of the world.

Troparion for the Holy Fathers of Nicea (Tone 8):

Thou, O Christ, art our God of exceeding praise who didst establish our holy Fathers as luminous stars upon earth, and through them didst guide us unto the true Faith, O most merciful One, glory to Thee.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan SILOUAN, Patriarchal Vicar
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

Troparion of St. George the Great Martyr (Tone 4):

Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion of the Ascension (Tone 6):

When Thou didst fulfill Thy dispensation for our sakes, uniting the terrestrials with the celestials, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, inseparable in space, but constant without separation, and crying unto Thy beloved: I am with you, and no one shall be against you.

The Epistle and Gospel Readings

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers. For Thou art just in all Thou hast done.

The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (20:16-18, 28-36)

In those days, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John (17:1-13)

At that time, Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son that the Son may glorify Thee, since Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on earth, having accomplished the work which Thou gavest Me to do; and now, Father, glorify Thou Me in Thy own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made. I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word. Now they know that everything that Thou hast given Me is from Thee; for I have given them the words which

Thou gavest Me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from Thee; and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine; all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name, which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are one. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy Name, which Thou have given Me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves."

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, see our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

Congratulations to our graduates: Kelsey Thompson graduates this year from St. Bede Academy, and Kenneth Wiltse from Jr. High at St. Joseph's. May God bless them in all their future endeavors!

Upcoming events and services:

- **Thursday, June 5:** Special Nominating Convention in Chicago. *Fr. Andrew and Ron Malooley will attend as delegates. Please pray as we nominate a successor for Metropolitan PHILIP.*
- There will be **no Saturday Vespers** for the next few weeks, but we will resume Vespers on Saturday, June 21 at 5:00 PM.
- **Next Sunday, June 8, is the Feast of Pentecost.** To commemorate the Descent of the Holy Spirit, we will have the Kneeling Prayers of Pentecost at the end of the Liturgy.
- **We will have NO SUNDAY SERVICES on Sunday, June 29.** Fr. Andrew and a number of us will be in Fort Wayne, IN for the Parish Life Conference (see below). If you are not going to the conference, you may want to use this opportunity to visit another Orthodox Church in the area: Rockford, Peoria, Bloomington, or Joliet.

Parish Life Conference

This summer's Parish Life Conference is coming quickly! Sponsored by St. John Chrysostom Church in Fort Wayne, IN, the conference will take place June 25 to 29 at the Grand Wayne Convention Center Hilton. **If you are interested in going, please register online at www.midwestplc2014.com or fill out a printed form, available downstairs.**

Sunday School and Christian Education resumes in the fall

Today will be the last day for Children's Sunday School. We will resume in the fall with Sunday school for both children and teens. We also plan to initiate a Teen SOYO ministry at St. George, and resume the Adult Education on Wednesday evenings. More details will be forthcoming! See Fr. Andrew if you have any questions or suggestions.