

:: Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev ::
On Prayer, Part VI: Orthodox Prayer Books

One can pray in different ways, in one's own words for example. Such prayer should constantly accompany one. Morning and evening, day and night, one can turn to God with simple words coming from the depths of one's heart.

But there are also prayers that were compiled by the saints in antiquity, which need to be read in order to learn how to pray. These prayers are contained in the Orthodox Prayer Book. There you will find prayers for the morning and evening, for repentance and thanksgiving, along with various canons, akathists, and much else. When you purchase an Orthodox Prayer Book, do not be alarmed that there are so many prayers. You do not have to read all of them.

If the morning prayers are read quickly, this takes about twenty minutes. But if one reads them thoughtfully and carefully, responding in one's heart to each word, then reading them can take a whole hour. Therefore, if you do not have time, do not try to read all the morning prayers; it is better to read one or two, but in such a way that every word reaches your heart.

Before the section with the "Morning Prayers," it says: "*Having risen from sleep, before any other action, stand reverently, considering thyself to be in the presence of the All-seeing God, and, having made the sign of the Cross, say: 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.' Then pause a moment, until all thy senses are calmed and thy thoughts forsake all things earthly.*" This pause, this "moment of silence," before beginning to pray is very important. Prayer should grow out of the quietness of our hearts. People who daily "read through" the morning and evening prayers constantly have the temptations of reading the "rule" as quickly as possible in order to get on with the business of the day. Often, with such reading, the most important thing – the content of the prayers – is eluded.

In the Prayer Book there are many petitions addressed to God that are repeated many times. For example, you can come across the recommendation to repeat "Lord, have mercy" twelve or forty times. Some people see this as some kind of formality and read this prayer as quickly as possible. By the way, in Greek "Lord, have mercy" is "*Kyrie, eleison.*" In Russian there is the verb *kurolesit* [to play tricks], which came from the fact that readers on the choir often quickly or repeatedly read "*Kyrie, eleison*" – that is, they were not praying, but were playing. Thus, in prayer one does not need to play tricks [*kurolesit*]. No matter how many times this prayer is read, it should be spoken with care, reverence, and love, with full delivery.

One does not need to try to read through all the prayers. It is better to dedicate twenty minutes to the single prayer "Our Father," repeating it several times, pondering every word. It is not easy for someone who is not accustomed to prayer immediately to read through a large number of prayers – and this is not something to which one should aspire. It is important to become imbued with the spirit that is breathed by the prayers of the Church Fathers. This is the main benefit to be derived from the prayers contained in the Orthodox Prayer Book.

Source: www.prawmir.com

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



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Sunday, July 6, 2014 – 4th Sunday after Pentecost

Righteous Father Sisoës the Great of Egypt; Apostles Archippos, Philemon and Onesimos of the Seventy; Martyrs Lucy the Virgin, Rex the Imperial Vicar in Campania and 24 others with them; Martyrs Apollonius, Epimachus & Alexander

Matins (Morning Prayer), 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
Holy Bread and Coffee Hour: Matthew and Olga Rowan

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 3):

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and became the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

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 to the Theotokos (Tone 2):

O undisputed intercessor of Christians, the mediatrix unrejected by the Creator, turn not away from the voice of our petitions, though we be sinners. Come to us with aid in time, who cry to thee in faith, with assistance, for thou art good. Hasten to us with intercessions, O Theotokos, who dost ever intercede for those who honor thee.

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

The Epistle and Gospel Readings

Sing praises to our God, sing praises. Clap your hands all ye peoples.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (6:18-23)

Brethren, having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For, the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (8:5-13)

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching Him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered Him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, He marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.



Announcements and Upcoming Events

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

Let us all give thanks to the Lord for the selection of our new Metropolitan, His Eminence Archbishop JOSEPH of Los Angeles. The Holy Synod met this past week and announced their decision on July 3. I was ordained by Archbishop JOSEPH in May 2011, and I have always been impressed with his prayerful piety, his commanding presence, and his compassion. This morning we begin praying for him in the Divine Liturgy, "our father, Metropolitan Joseph." May God grant him many years!

Many thanks to all who assisted with Nathan Hoppe's visit this past Monday. He was very impressed with the turnout, in spite of the bad weather, and he very much enjoyed the coffee hour afterwards. Please keep Nathan and Gabriella and their children in your prayers as they travel back to Albania later this summer.

Camp St. George will be held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, August 10-16. We have three campers this year: Michael Harshman, Rebecca Harshman, and Maggie Kishler.

Upcoming events and services:

- **Saturday, July 12:** Vespers, 5:00 PM
- **Tuesday, August 5:** We have been invited to worship with Christ the Savior Orthodox Church in Rockford, for their patronal feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord. Vespers begins at 6:00 PM.

Sunday School and Christian Education resumes in the fall

We will resume in September 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.

"And I, a sinner, have been trying to love God for more than forty years, and cannot say that I perfectly love Him. If we love someone we always remember him and try to please him; day and night our heart is occupied with that object.

Is that how you, gentlemen, love God? Do you often turn to Him, do you always remember Him, do you always pray to Him and fulfill His holy commandments? For our good, for our happiness at least let us make a vow that from this day, from this hour, from this minute we shall strive to love God above all else and to fulfill His holy will."

+ St. Herman of Alaska