

:: Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev ::
On Prayer, Part XXV: "Thy Kingdom Come"

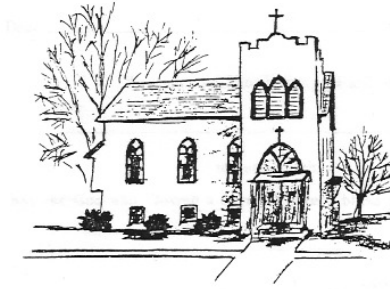
What do these words mean? After all, the Kingdom of God will inevitably come, the world will end, and mankind will enter into another dimension. Obviously, we are not praying that the end of the world would come, but that the Kingdom of God would come *to us*, that is, that it would become real in *our* lives, that our present – humdrum, gray, and sometimes dark and tragic – earthly lives would be permeated by the presence of the Kingdom of God.

What is the Kingdom of God? In order to reply to this question, one needs to turn to the Gospel and remember that Jesus Christ began His preaching with the words: *Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand* (Matthew 4:17). Then Christ repeatedly spoke to people of His Kingdom; He did not object when He was called a King – for instance, when He entered Jerusalem and was greeted as the King of the Jews. Even when on trial and being mocked, slandered, and maligned, the Lord replied to Pilate's apparently ironic question – *Art Thou the King of the Jews?* —with the words: *My kingdom is not of this world* (Matthew 18:33-36). These words of the Savior also contain an answer to the question of what the Kingdom of God is. When we turn to God with the words "Thy Kingdom come," we are asking that this otherworldly and spiritual Kingdom of Christ become a reality in our lives, that the spiritual dimension about which so many speak, but about which so few know by experience, would become manifest in our lives.

When the Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples what awaited Him in Jerusalem – torments, suffering, and death on the Cross – the mother of two of them said to Him: *Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom* (Matthew 20:21). He was speaking of how He must suffer and die, but she imagined a Man on a royal throne and wanted her sons to be next to Him. But, as we understand, the Kingdom of God was first revealed on the Cross: Christ was crucified, bleeding profusely, and above Him hung a sign: "King of the Jews." It was only later that the Kingdom of God was revealed in the glorious and saving Resurrection of Christ. It was this Kingdom that we were promised: a Kingdom that is given through great efforts and tribulations. The path to the Kingdom of God lies through Gethsemane and Golgotha: through the trials, temptations, sorrows, and sufferings that befall all of us. We should remember this when we say the prayer "Thy Kingdom come."

Source: www.pravmir.com

*Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andrew, by email or phone.
If you are not on the church's email list and would like to be, please let Fr. Andrew know.*



St. George Orthodox Church of Spring Valley

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November 16, 2014 – St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Matins (Morning Prayer), 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
Children's Sunday School, 9:15 AM (downstairs)

Today's Holy Bread: Ron and Dottie Malooley
Next Week: OPEN

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 for St. Matthew (Tone 3):

O holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, intercede with the merciful God, to grant our souls forgiveness of sins.

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 for the Entrance of the Theotokos (Tone 2):

The all-pure temple of the Savior, the most precious bridal chamber and Virgin, the treasure-house of the glory of God, today enters the Temple of the Lord, bringing with her the grace which is in the divine Spirit: whom also the angels of God do celebrate in song; for she is the heavenly tabernacle.

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

Scripture Readings

His voice has gone out into all the earth. The heavens declare the glory of God.

The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (4:9-16)

Brethren, God has exhibited us Apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (9:9-13)

At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and He said to him, "Follow Me." And he rose and followed Him. And as He sat at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when Jesus heard it, He said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Some thoughts for the start of the Advent season....

"Having put your hope in Christ who provides for all creation and nurtures it, keep away from all unjust gains, and do not be too attached even to honest income. Put it to good use and let the poor share in it as much as possible."

~ St. Gregory Palamas

"The Nativity Forty-day Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who — having fasted for forty days and forty nights — received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin the living Word — not written upon stone, but born, incarnate — and we will commune of His Divine Body."

~ St. Simeon of Thessaloniki

Announcements and Upcoming Events

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

Upcoming events and services:

- No Wednesday prayer and Bible Study group this week
- **Thursday, Nov. 20:** Divine Liturgy for the Entrance of the Theotokos, 6:00 PM
- No Saturday Vespers this week
- **Next Sunday, Nov. 23:** Matins, 9:00 AM; Sunday School, 9:15 AM (downstairs); Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
- **Wednesday, Nov. 26:** Akathist of Thanksgiving, 6:00 PM

Our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Olga Farral. Our dear Olga passed away last week, at the age of 93. I had been visiting her in her home about once a week for the past few months, and before she passed, she said, "Tell everyone at St. George that I love them and miss them." Her funeral was this past Friday morning in Erie, and we will have her memorial prayers here at St. George in the coming weeks, at the family's request. May her memory be eternal!

The Season of Advent

Our Orthodox Advent began yesterday, Nov. 15. The purpose of this season is to prepare our souls and bodies for the celebration of Christmas. As much as you are able, please do not neglect the traditional disciplines of fasting (at least from meat), prayer (a good time to begin attending our Wednesday or Saturday night services!) and almsgiving. All coffee hour food during that time should be meatless. Please see Fr. Andrew if you have any questions.

Children and Youth

St. George's **Church school program** will continue every Sunday through the fall and winter. We will continue our lessons on each Sunday's Gospel to open our children's minds and hearts to the readings of Holy Scripture during Liturgy. Please see Khouria Patty if you have any questions. Thank you to Patrice Nimee and Kh. Patty for agreeing to lead this ministry!

Coffee Hour Schedule

The new Holy Bread and Coffee Hour schedule for 2015 is available. Please look over the names already listed on it and sign up for any additional weeks as your family desires. Signing up for a week entails a donation for the Holy Bread, and providing the food for coffee hour. On your week, please also make sure you provide Father with an updated list of family prayer requests (living and deceased). **Also know that you are welcome to submit names and prayer requests to Fr. Andrew at any time for inclusion in the Liturgy.**