

:: Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev ::

On Prayer, Part XXIX: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

What is temptation and who is the evil one?

Temptation is a test that is either sent to us from God, or comes from the devil, but is allowed by God. Every temptation for us is a kind of endurance test. And sometimes we pass this test, and sometimes we don't. When we ask God: "And lead us not into temptation," we are as it were saying to God: "Do not send us a test beyond our strength; send us the kind that we can deal with, so that the trials and tribulations that You send will not crush us or kill our faith."

The evil one is the devil, the enemy of the human race. With regard to the devil, one needs to avoid two extremes. Some tend to deny the existence of the devil and demons. These people – believers or unbelievers – do not recognize the real existence in this world of evil powers; moreover, not as abstract powers, but as living beings, because the devil and demons, like angels, are real, living beings. There is another extreme, especially widespread among believing and churchly people, when people exaggerate the importance of the devil, when one becomes so afraid of the actions of the devil and evil powers, that he lives in a semi-paralyzed condition. Hence the common fear among believers of the evil eye, black magic, and the like. Hence comes about a timid approach to life, when one is scared of everything, when one sees threats everywhere, and when one can't live creatively, freely, and fully.

We should remember that evil, of course, has power and can have a negative, even devastating impact on our lives, but only when we ourselves allow it access to us. The devil is powerless where he isn't invited, where his presence isn't wanted. If one goes to church, prays, wears a cross, and makes the sign of the cross; if he fulfills God's commandments and refrains from sins, then the devil is powerless and has no place in such a person. When does the devil gain strength? When one opens the floodgates and vents in one's home; when, for instance, one falls into a given passion: say, when one becomes addicted to drugs or alcohol. The danger of alcoholism is not that people drink more wine than they should; it's that it weakens him and opens the way for the devil to get inside his soul.

Therefore, when we pray to God: "Deliver us from the evil one," we are asking that he would always grant us the power to refrain from that which gives the evil one power over our lives. And if we learn this, then neither the devil, nor any other dark power, nor black magic, nor anything like it can have any effect on us.

Source: www.prawmir.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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December 14, 2014 – Sunday of the Forefathers of Christ

Matins (Morning Prayer), 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM

Today's Holy Bread and Coffee Hour: Nicholas and Anysia Medawar

Next Week: Sadie Malooley / Kim and Jeannie Leonard and family

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 2):

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hell with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

Troparion of the Forefathers of Christ (Tone 2):

Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and she it was who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

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 Advent (Tone 3):

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth in an ineffable manner to the Word before the ages. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest. And glorify with the angels shepherds Him who shall appear by His own will as a new babe, being God before the ages.

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

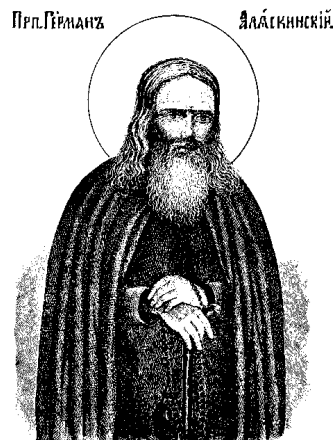
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.
For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians (3:4-11)

Brethren, when Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."



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:

- **Wednesday, Dec. 17:** Evening Prayer and Bible Study, 6:00 pm. *This week, we will continue our discussion of the Christmas story in St. Luke's Gospel. Thank you to all who came last week and contributed to a lively and edifying evening!*
- **Saturday, Dec. 20:** Vespers, 5:00 pm
- **Next Sunday, Dec. 21:** Matins, 9:00 AM; Sunday School, 9:15 AM (downstairs); Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
- **Christmas Eve: Vespers and Divine Liturgy, beginning 6:00 PM**
- **Christmas morning: Matins with Holy Communion, 10:00 AM**

The Ladies of St. George: Advent Project

At the Nov. 16 meeting, the members voted to give \$200 to Project Success, our local food pantry, as an Advent project. All ladies of the church are asked to give something towards this; see Dee Khoury if any questions. One check will be sent from the Ladies of St. George for the Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets, given to area families in need. **If you wish to donate, make your check payable to "Ladies of St. George," with "Advent Project" in the memo line.** Your support is appreciated!

The Season of Advent

Advent continues through Christmas Eve. 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.

Coffee Hour Schedule

The Holy Bread and Coffee Hour schedule for 2015 is downstairs. 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.**

November income and expenses for St. George Church:

Income: \$4713.58

Expenses: \$9402.04

Bank Balance: 12/1/14 \$10,163.89

Please see our treasurer, Anyisia Medawar with any questions.