



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Metropolis of Atlanta

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

255 Beauvoir Road, Biloxi MS 39531

P.O. Box 8534 Biloxi, Mississippi 39535

(228) 388-6138 www.holytrinitybiloxi.org

Rev. Father Paisius McGrath frpaisius@zoominternet.net (724) 991-6715

April 2021 Bulletin

A Special Message from Fr. Dean



Our Spiritual Journey During Great Lent

Great Lent, beginning with Clean Monday and ending with Christ's Resurrection, is a period of fasting, praying and repenting that strengthens our faith in the Lord.

Pre-Lenten services help prepare us for our spiritual renewal. Three **Saturdays of the Souls** honor both the Saints of our church and deceased Orthodox Christians awaiting judgment. **Meat Fare Sunday** marks the last day to eat meat before Great Lent. **Cheese Fare Sunday** marks the final day to eat oil and dairy products.

On the first Sunday of Great Lent, **The Sunday of Orthodoxy**, we bring our icons from home to commemorate the return of icons to the church in 843 A.D. Great Lent continues on the second Sunday with **The Feast Day of St. Gregory Palamas** followed by the third Sunday with the **Adoration of the Holy Cross**. The Cross, a symbol of the victory of good over evil, gives the faithful worshippers the courage and reassurance to continue on their spiritual journey.

The fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to **St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)**. The fifth Sunday of Lent is **The Feast Day of St. Mary of Egypt**.

On **The Saturday of Lazarus**, the day before Palm Sunday and the start of Holy Week, the Divine Liturgy is held to celebrate the divine love that brought Lazarus back to life.

Palm Sunday celebrates Jesus' triumphant journey into Jerusalem on a donkey. We receive a palm cross on this day as a symbol of our willingness to follow Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Cross. The **Holy Monday** service urges us to be spiritually prepared to receive Jesus by lighting our lives with faith and good works.

The **Holy Tuesday** service asks us to repent our sins and to forgive others.

The sacrament of Holy Unction takes place on **Holy Wednesday**.

On **Holy Thursday** morning, we recall the washing of the Disciples' feet and the mystical supper of Christ the Martyr. In the evening, the solemn service is the Matins of Holy Friday during which time we commemorate the Passion of Jesus Christ. Through the Twelve Gospels, we remember He willingly

endured the spittings, scourgings, buffetings, scorn, mocking, nails, spear, the Cross and death to take away our sins.

Holy Friday is one of the holiest days of the year. In the morning, the Royal Hours are offered as we keep vigil at the side of the crucified Christ. During the afternoon Apokathelosis service, the priest takes Jesus' body from the Cross, wraps it in a white cloth and places it on the altar, as a sign of His burial.

In the evening, the beautiful hymns of the Lamentations are chanted with both sorrow and joy. The Kouvouklion with the Epitaphios is taken around the Church with the faithful following holding a lighted candle symbolizing their commitment to Jesus who is the light of the world. When re-entering the Church, we walk under the raised Kouvouklion holding the Epitaphios to symbolize that we pass through death into life in Jesus.

Holy Saturday is a day of hope. We anticipate Jesus' victory over death. Since the liturgy anticipates the resurrection, bright vestments are worn

Shortly before midnight, the church is darkened. The faithful receive the resurrection light from the priest and form a procession out of the church to hear the good news of Jesus' triumph. The faithful sing, "Christ is Risen."

The **Easter Divine Liturgy** follows with everyone prepared to receive Holy Communion. The priest reads the magnificent sermon of St. John Chrysostom.

At the **Agape Vespers** on Pascha, we gather to share the joy of the Resurrection and to express God's love for us and our love for each other. The Gospel from John 20:19-25 is read in many languages to symbolize that the news of the Resurrection has spread to all nations. The fast of Great Lent is broken.

George, this truly great and glorious Martyr of Christ, was born of a father from Cappadocia and a mother from Palestine. Being a military tribune, or chiliarch (that is, a commander of a thousand troops), he was illustrious in battle and highly honored for his courage. When he learned that the Emperor Diocletian was preparing a persecution of the Christians, Saint George presented himself publicly before the Emperor and denounced him. When threats and promises could not move him from his steadfast confession, he was put to unheard-of tortures, which he endured with great bravery, overcoming them by his faith and love towards Christ. By the wondrous signs that took place in his contest, he guided many to the knowledge of the truth, including



Queen Alexandra, wife of Diocletian, and was finally beheaded in 296 in Nicomedia. His sacred remains were taken by his servant from Nicomedia to Palestine, to a town called Lydda, the homeland of his mother, and then were finally transferred to the church which was raised up in his name. (The translation of the Saint's holy relics to the church in Lydda is commemorated on November 3; Saint Alexandra the Queen, on April 21.) If April 23 falls on or before Great and Holy Pascha, the Feast of St. George is translated to Bright Monday.

Schedule of Services for April-May

Friday, April 2

Compline and Salutations to Holy Theotokos 6 pm

Sunday, April 4, 3rd Sunday of Great Lent/Sunday of Holy Cross

Orthros/ Bringing out Holy Cross 9:30 am

Divine Liturgy 10 am

Wednesday, April 7
Liturgy of Pre Sanctified 6 pm

Friday, April 9
Compline and Salutations to Holy Theotokos 6 pm

Sunday, April 11, 4th Sunday of Great Lent/ Sunday of St. John Climacus
Orthros 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10 am

Wednesday, April 14
Liturgy of Pre Sanctified 6 pm

Sunday, April 18, 5th Sunday of Great Lent/ Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt
Orthros 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10 am

Wednesday, April 21
Liturgy of Pre Sanctified 6 pm

Friday, April 23
Compline and Salutations to Saint Lazarus 6 pm

Saturday, April 24 Lazarus Saturday
Holy Chrismation of Alex and Dylan 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10 am

Sunday, April 25, Palm Sunday
Orthros and Blessing of Palms and Willows 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10
Procession with Palms

Monday, April 26, Holy Monday
Liturgy of Pre Sanctified 10 am
Bridegroom Matins 6 pm

Tuesday, April 27, Holy Tuesday
Bridegroom Matins 6 pm

Wednesday, April 28, Holy Wednesday
Liturgy of Pre Sanctified 10 am
Service of Holy Unction 6 pm

Thursday, April 29, Holy Thursday
Vesperal Liturgy of St Basil 10 am
Orthros and Twelve Passion Gospels 6 pm

Friday, April 30, Holy Friday
Decoration of Kouvukion 9:30 am
Unnailing Great Vespers and Lamentations 5:30 pm

Saturday, May 1, Holy Saturday
Vesperal Liturgy of St Basil 10 am
Paschal Nocturnes, Orthros, Divine Liturgy 11:30 pm

Sunday, May 2, Holy Pascha
Agape Vespers and Feast 2 pm

Monday, May 3, Renewal Monday
Paschal Hours 9:30
Paschal Divine Liturgy 10 am

Friday, May 7, Renewal Friday/ Theotokos of Life Giving Spring
Paschal Hours 9:30
Paschal Divine Liturgy 10 am

Sunday, May 9, Saint Thomas Sunday
Mother's Day
Orthros 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10 am

**Fr. Paisius will be available for Confession *before* Holy Week.
Exceptions will be made *during* Holy Week.
Please make an appointment.**

Visitors

*A warm welcome to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church.
We are glad to have you worship with us today.
While Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians,
we invite those who are not Orthodox Christians to
remain until the end of the worship service,
and receive a blessing from our Lord Jesus Christ,
through the offering of the Blessed Bread.*

***Please remember to allow the children to receive Communion first.
Fr. Paisius will have Council members usher parishioners to come forward for Communion,
starting from the back row to the front.***

[The Drama of Holy Week, Christ's Triumph Over Sin and Death](#) . . . Holy Week (schedule of services is above) is set apart in the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Year so that we might slow down our pace and meditate upon and relive the glory and the agony of that week in our Lord's life which opened once again to all creation, the doors of Paradise. The events of that week are presented to us by the church as a drama, which unveiling its mysteries to us, helps us identify with them and elevates us in the all-embracing movement toward our Lord's triumph over sin and death.

The scenes take place in Jerusalem. The players are real. The events are historical. And because all humans are ultimately involved in this drama, there can be no passive audience. It demands participation. Commemorative worship, through faith, takes us back to these events and causes us to relive them. To fully benefit from this annual Holy Week drama, to experience a transformation in our lives and spiritual growth, we must participate in the services.

[Blessing an Easter Basket](#) . . . We will continue the Slavic Tradition of Blessing of the Easter Basket this year. Parishioners brought 15 -20 Easter Baskets to be blessed two years ago. If you have the Church Cookbook see it listed under Slavic Traditions for the full meaning. The baskets are blessed after the Resurrection Service at Pascha.

The blessing of the Easter Baskets stems from the Christian communities desire to ask God's blessing on the foods that will break the Lenten Fast. The religious significance attached to the foods in the basket is symbolic of Christ Himself, our true Passover. Each Basket traditionally starts with a Church Candle and the following items:

Pascha – An Easter Bread made with egg yolks and dough. It represents “Christ—the Bread of Life.”

Meat – Usually ham, kielbasi or hard salami. This represents the fatted calf prepared for the prodigal son (fallen mankind) on his return to his father (our Heavenly Father).

Cheese – Either an egg, or cottage cheese. This symbolized the moderation that all Christians should have in all things.

Eggs – The egg is symbolic of the grave and life renewed by breaking out of it –The Resurrection! Red eggs are used to symbolize the blood Christ shed for us.

Salt – represents the truth of the message of Christ.

Horseradish – is a reminder of the bitter drink that was given to Christ on the Cross.

Butter – symbolizes the Lamb of God and represents the sacrifice Christ made for all people.

Youth can put their special items in to be blessed (e.g. jelly beans, etc). Foods are placed in a basket so they can all be touched by the Holy Water when blessed after the Resurrection Liturgy. A **candle** is brought, placed in the basket and lit just prior to blessing. The basket is covered by a white cloth when brought to the Church. So please bring your Easter Baskets to be blessed. It is a special tradition. For further information contact George Yurchak.

[Symbols in the Orthodox Paschal Celebration](#) [Excerpts from Fr. Anthony Coniaris](#)

There are some thoughts so deep that words are powerless to express them. They have to be acted out if they are to be expressed at all. One such event is the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus. How can we express this great happening with mere words? How can we describe it? What can mere words say to help us capture its full meaning? Very little. This is why the Orthodox Church tries to preach the Resurrection through her liturgy and the magnificent Resurrection service. The Resurrection is acted out before us and we are allowed to participate in it to help us capture its meaning existentially.

The Darkened Church

The Church gradually sinks into total darkness, symbolizing the darkness of the grave, the darkness of man's life without God, the darkness of despair, the darkness of meaninglessness, the darkness of evil. This is part of the darkness in which we stand– the darkness that is within us and around us. We are– all of us– threatened by this darkness. But the glorious message of Easter is that in darkness there is light. "In Him (Christ) was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." This is the message we hear proclaimed in the Easter Gospel lesson. God's light shines in the darkness and cannot be put out. God has come into the world in Christ Jesus and has met the full force of sin and death and has won the victory. This is the heart of our Orthodox Christian faith.

The Paschal Candle

At the stroke of midnight the Paschal Candle is illuminated at the altar– the candle that represents Christ the Light of the World. The door to the sanctuary swings open representing the opening of Christ's tomb, and the priest appears holding the light representing the Resurrected Christ. "Come, receive light from the unwaning light," he sings, "and glorify Christ who is risen from the dead." The worshipers light their candles from the Paschal candle, passing on the light to their neighbors until the whole Church is ablaze with the new Light of the Resurrection proclaiming to the world that Christ is risen, that through His Resurrection our darkness has been changed into light, our has become life, our midnight has become dawn, a dawn of victory. In Greece one of the most panoramic sights is to stand on a mountain and look down on a village or a great city as the people come out from church following the midnight Easter liturgy. One sees thousands of flickering flames coming out of churches and spreading to all parts of the city or the countryside. What a meaningful custom this is. Neitzche said once that Christ still buried. We Christians– he said– keep Him buried in the sepulchers which are our Churches and we will not let Him out. The beauty of the custom of taking home the lighted Easter candle is that we carry the living, resurrected Christ out of our Churches and into our homes. How quickly the darkness of this world would vanish if everyone who confessed allegiance to Christ would go out into every area of life and let the light of the Resurrected Christ shine brightly and unashamedly.

Decorate for Palm Sunday/Easter Clean Up. . . We plan to decorate for Palm Sunday and to clean up the church and grounds in preparation for Pascha. Cleanup will take place on Saturday, April 24 after church services. Please volunteer your time to help.

Palm Sunday Luncheon, April 25 . . . Master Chef Craig Henderson will again prepare his Tilapia specialty. We will also have Greek salad, potatoes and green beans. If anyone would like to bring a dessert to share, please bring one.

Agape Feast, May 2 . . . The Agape Feast will be on Pascha, May 2, after Agape Vespers at 2:00 pm. The Church will cook lamb, potatoes and green beans. Everyone is asked to bring a dish, especially traditional ethnic dishes to be shared by all.

Religious Needs

Clergy are available for talk, confession, pastoral counseling, spiritual care, individual prayer, etc. Tours of our church can be arranged with John Collins. If you want to set up an appointment, please contact George Yurchak – 228-860-3376 or at georgeyurchak@yahoo.com.

Birthdays for April . . . Happy birthday to Eleni Vganges, April 1st, Anastasia Aron, April 2nd, Oksana Kozhanova, April 3rd, Angelos Vamvakas, April 6th, Zoe Mavromihalis-Nelson, April 10th, Rena Lohrbach, April 18th.



Anniversaries for April . . . Angelo and Photine Hagicostas, Apr 26th.

Church Thanks . . . Thanks to all those who have given their time and talents in helping out at Holy Trinity. Your time and help contributes significantly in welcoming new parishioners, keeping up the church/grounds and keeping the church available for all Orthodox to attend. Many thanks to Eleni Vganges for making the Prosforo throughout the year.

Get Well . . . Prayers and blessings to Fr Jim Karagas, Karen Bridges, Lela & Mitch Roberts, Photine Hagicostas, Angelo Hagicostas, Nicki Arnold, George Vaporis, Elizabeth Vamvakas. Fr. Paisius will conduct home visitations and give communion to those parishioners who are ill and can't be with us for Liturgy. Please contact Fr Paisius a to make arrangements, 724-991-6715. We want to pray as a community for those that may be too ill to be with us during church services.



Ethnic Marketplace & Gift Corner

Please remember the Ethnic Marketplace and Gift Corner for your shopping needs. We have many ethnic items for sale. Included in the Marketplace are olive oil, halva, olives, jellies, backwheat, cavier, salted herring, Russian butter, Bulgarian cheeses, candies, Greek cheeses and coffee. In the Gift Corner we have Greek tablecloths and aprons, icons, bracelets, Greek coffeepot & coffee, jewelry, Greek CDs, incense and charcoal, lacquered Russian products, Russian kitchen supplies, Greek T-shirts.

Prayer for Parents: Entrusting Us with the Gift of Family

O Lord, Heavenly Father. You have blessed us with the gift of family and have entrusted us with their spiritual upbringing. You commanded that we should teach our children about You in our lives, when we sit in our house, when we walk by the way, when we lie down, and when we rise.

Guide us, O Lord, every moment of the day as we work toward this awesome task.

Let the words of Christ dwell in us, so that we may teach and guide our family, through our words and deeds, to the saving knowledge of Your everlasting kingdom. Help u, O Lord, be compassionate, kind, and patient throughout our days. If one of us has a complaint against another, help us to forgive each other, as You have forgiven us. Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts. Above all, help us to remember to put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

We thank you, Lord, for the many blessings and mercies You continually bestow on us. In everything we do, in word or deed, may we always do so in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through His Holy Spirit. Amen

--Orthodox Observer

On Worshiping During Lent – Lent in the Home by Melissa Tsongranis

Worshiping as a family is something we all need to work on. Sometimes we rush into these Lenten services thinking it is something we have to do and we don't prepare enough to go to these services. "This is why those who think of church services only in terms of obligations, who always inquire about the required minimum can never understand the true nature of worship which is to take us into a different

world—that of God's Presence!” So when we consider that quote and really think about what we need to do as a family, we need to quiet down and not just go to the service but to be living them. Teach our children about the service and to teach ourselves about the service. Prepare them to be engaged in the services and to help them afterward to debrief.

Attending Church as a Family -- Preparing through Daily Activities by Angie Gialourakis

Some simple suggestions for weaving church life into your daily life at home:

Around the Table - Communications is vital to relationships. One of the best times to communicate as a family is around the dinner table. Start with a prayer of thanks and then take time to listen to each of your children as they share their day, as well as your spouse. It is amazing how much learning can take place as parents listen, really listen, to their children and to each other.

Preparation - Weekend schedules fill up quickly with errands, chores, homework, family and social events, sports, and all the other activities that make our family lives unique. By Sunday morning we confront the leftovers—mainly attending church and Divine Liturgy. As much as possible, plan your weekend around church. Add church to the calendar first, then fill in the other tasks and events. Where conflicts arise, stress the importance of attending church—to praise and thank the Lord for all that is good, to worship as a the Body of Christ, and to attend Sunday School. In this way, we offer God our first fruits rather than our leftovers.

Increase the Sense of Peace - Remove the distractions while preparing for church will greatly increase your chances of on time arrival. A sense of peace will ultimately create a deeper understanding of how and why we pray and commune with God. As children and parents learn Godly peace and love in the home, they will appreciate the Godly peace and love found in the Church. “Fathers and mothers: Go and lead your child by the hand into the Church.” -St John Chrysostom

Lent is a Time of Renewal and Preparation -- Be ready for Easter and its promises. Choose penitential practices that encourage inner renewal and reconciliation with God. Set aside time for prayer, study and participation in Lenten Worship services. Meditate on Christ's sacrifice and its meaning for us today. Observing Lent can help you experience the full joy of Easter.

“Be doers of the word, and not hearers only.” James 1:22.

Prioritize Sunday as the Anchor of Your Family's Week

The Divine Liturgy is the primary worship service in the life of the Orthodox Church. It is where the Body and Blood of Our Lord and Savior is offered for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Simply put, attending the Divine Liturgy as a family should be a priority. The Lord's Day isn't merely the day we go to church – it is the primary day we become the Church – the people of God. (By George Tsongranis)

STEWARDSHIP

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE FOR 2021

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is grateful for every donation received throughout the year. Your generous support enables Holy Trinity to spread the teaching of Our Lord Jesus Christ, serve regular Divine Liturgies and Sacraments and provide spiritual nourishment to our faithful, their families and those

in need. Your pledge of support is a sign of your heartfelt participation in the life of our parish family and it plays a vital role enabling us to meet our financial responsibilities.

We pray that everybody who attends Holy Trinity and cares for its financial security will make a pledge for 2021. If you haven't received a pledge form you can download it from www/holytrinitybiloxi.org website, under Stewardship or pick up a hard copy either at the candle counter or from any Parish Council member. You need to make a pledge as soon as possible. Pledge forms will be available at church. Please take a few minutes to fill out the pledge form and submit it to Craig Henderson (President and Stewardship Chairman), George Yurchak (Vice-President, Parish Council), or Rodney Bridges (Treasurer, Parish Council).

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH STEWARDS FOR 2021

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the 2021 Stewardship Program as of March 31. Holy Trinity has received pledges from 42 parishioners, totalling \$39,105, from the follownig:

Chrisanthi Beach
Melissa & Caleb Bridges
Rodney & Karen Bridges
Robert Brouillette III
John & Donna Collins
Steve & CoCo Collins
Nicoletta Conner
George Contas
John Demetrakopoulos
Virginia Freeman
Angelo & Photine Hagicostas

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Katherine Kaleto
Mihail Kastrinos
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Irene Koskan
Howard Lassalle
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Stratos Mandas

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Louis & Linda Peters
Melissa Schwartz
Angelos & Elizabeth Vamvakas
Katerina Vamvakas
George Vapouris
Eleni Vganges
Spiro Vganges
Kosta Vlahos
George & Sheila Yurchak

Church Directory

Church Clergy

Rev. Fr. Paisius

Chanters – Lead, Angelos Vamvakas,
Melissa Bridges, Rodney Bridges, Hugh Donohoe,
CoCo Collins, Akaterina Vamvakas

2021 Parish Council

President – George Yurchak
Vice President – Donna Collins
Treasurer – Rodney Bridges
Secretary – Craig Henderson
Member at Large – Evie Magiros

Librarian Hugh Donohoe, Brandi Donohoe

Historian Brandi Donohoe, Akaterina Vamvakas

Facilities

Chair – Craig Henderson, Cristian Ionescu

Education & Culture Committees

Chair – George Yurchak

Greek Culture Chair – Maria Loukatos

Ukrainian Culture Chair – Nataliya Petrovska Kirby

Romanian Culture Chair – Meri Ionescu

Moldovan Culture Chair – Alexandru Tulburi

Russian Culture Chair – George Yurchak

Kazakhstan Culture Chair - Natalya Gray

Staff

Kiosk – George Yurchak

Publications Editor – Sheila Hemenway-Yurchak

Cleaning – Chrisanthi Beach, Fanoula Christidis,
Melissa Schwartz, Mihail Kastrinos, & Akaterina Vamvakas,

Parish Ministries

Feed the Hungry – Melissa Bridges

Ladies of the Agape Chair – Meri Ionescu

Stewardship Chair – Craig Henderson

Reader – Rodney Bridges, John Collins, CoCo Collins

Adult Education – Fr Paisius

Outreach – George Yurchak, Akaterina Vamvakas

Web Master – Steve Collins

Pastoral Assistant – Craig Henderson, Caleb Bridges, Mihail Kastrinos

Society of Wisdom – George Vapouris

Strategic Planning – Chair, CoCo Collins

Greek Dance Instruction – Steve & CoCo Collins

Art Coordinator – Sheila Hemenway-Yurchak

Church Tours – John Collins

PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION: questions for self-examination



offered by
The Philadelphia Deanery
of the
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America

Questions for penitents
according to The Ten Commandments
by Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky

Exodus 20:1—"And God spoke all these words, saying, 'I am the Lord your God...You shall have no other gods before me'."

Do you constantly have the thought of God in mind and the fear of God in your heart?

Is your faith in God shaken by skepticism and doubt?

Do you question the holy tenets of the Orthodox Faith?

Do you despair of God's mercy?

Do you pray to God every morning and evening? Is your prayer zealous?

Do you always attend Divine Services whenever possible? Do you miss them without good reason?

Do you prefer religious books and do you read them?

Have you read atheistic and heretical books out of sinful curiosity?

When the Church requests it, do you willingly make donations to the Church and to charitable causes?

Have you consulted fortune-tellers, [astrologers or numerologists, etc.]? Have you taken part in seances?

[Do you trust in luck and chance? Do you gamble?]

Have you forgotten about the most important thing in life, that is, preparation for eternity and your answer to God if you have given yourself up to vanity, sloth, pleasure and carelessness?

"You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God..."

Does God take first place with you? Perhaps God does not take first place, but something else, for example, the accumulation of money, the acquisition of property, amusement and entertainment, food and drink, clothes, self-adornment, the urge to devote attention to yourself, to play the leading part, to receive praise, to spend your time in distractions, in reading frivolous books, etc?

Are you distracted from God by a passion for television, movies, the theater, card games?

Perhaps because of worrying about yourself or your family you forget about God and fail to please Him and do not carry out what is required of you by the Church?

If so, that means you are serving an idol and that it, not God, has first place with you.

Perhaps art, sport or study take first place with you. Perhaps some passion (love of money, gluttony, carnal love) has taken possession of heart? Have you made an idol of yourself out of pride or egotism? Examine yourself. [Has pride in yourself blinded you to your own sinfulness?]

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

Do you use foul language in ordinary everyday conversation?

Have you been thoughtless and irreverent with the name of God, or what is worse, have you treated something holy as a joke? Or, God forbid, in a fit of anger or bitterness or despair have you given way to impudent grumbling at God or even reviling Him?

Have you sworn an oath and then broken it?

Have you given in to despondency?

Do you pray absent-mindedly or inattentively?

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work...for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it."

Do you violate the sanctity of Sundays and the great feast days which have been fixed by the Church by working for gain or profit?

Instead of attending Divine services on feast-days, do you spend time entertaining yourself, for example at a dance or a theater, movies, or some gathering where there is no mention of God?

Have you yourself arranged such entertainments and gatherings and thus distracted other people from attendance at Church?

Do you conscientiously attend Divine services? Do you come to Church late, at the middle or even at the end of the service? Do you leave it early? [Do you loiter in the back of the Church and not enter into the service itself? Do you leave the service to gossip, smoke, or do chores thinking that God will not notice your behavior?]

Do you attend Church on Sundays and Feast-Days?

Do you help the poor and those in need?

Do you violate the fasts?

[Are you addicted to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, pleasure or other things harmful to the body, which is the Temple of the Holy Spirit?]

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you."

Have there been times when you were disrespectful towards your parents, or inattentive to their advice and concern? Have you taken care of them in their illness and old age?

If your parents have died, do you often pray for them in church or at home for the repose of their souls?

Have you been disrespectful towards the pastors of the Church? Have you criticized them? Have you become embittered against them when they reminded you of eternity, of preparation for it, of the salvation of your soul, of sins; or when they call on you to be obedient to the Church and her rules?

Have you insulted someone older than you?

"You shall not kill."

You have not physically killed anyone in the literal sense, but perhaps you were the cause of someone's death indirectly: you could have helped someone poor or sick but did not; you did not feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, take in a stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in jail?

Have you committed spiritual murder, that is, have you led someone astray from the proper path; have you been enticed by heresy or schism; have you tempted someone to sin?

Have you killed someone spiritually by a display of malice and hatred?

Have you killed someone spiritually or destroyed their life through gossip?

Do you forgive those who offend you? Do you bear malice and resentment in your heart for long?

Do you blame yourself in everything or only in some things?

[Do you blame others unjustly for your own faults and sins and weaknesses?]

Have you had recourse to abortions, which is also killing, a sin of both husband and wife?

"You shall not commit adultery."

Have you lived with someone of the opposite sex in a carnal relationship without having had a church marriage?

Do you conduct yourself freely and loosely with members of the opposite sex?

Have you defiled yourself by giving in to impure and lewd thoughts and desires? Or by reading pornographic books or looking at pornographic pictures? This includes sinful songs, suggestive dances, dirty jokes, [dirty] movies, immodest dress, etc.

Have you committed impure acts by yourself or with others?

Have you had carnal relations with another person?

[Have you engaged in homosexual practices?]

Have you engaged in unnatural practices?

"You shall not steal."

Have you taken someone else's property in a direct or indirect way? — by fraud, by diverse cunning, conspiracy? [Have you withheld a worker's pay or attempted to cheat him out of what is his rightful due?]

Perhaps you have not done what you were obliged to do in return for the recompense you received.

Have you excessively yearned for material goods without wishing to share them with others who need them?

Has miserliness taken possession of your soul? [Are you stingy and lacking in generosity when it comes to sharing things that God has given to you out of His goodness?]

Have you accepted stolen goods?

Have you disposed of others' goods when they were entrusted to you?

[Have you misused your employer's resources or services?]

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Have you slandered your neighbor? Have you criticized others, spoken scandal or abused them for what you imagine are their sins and vices?

[Have you lacked good will towards others, preferring to think evil of them?]

Do you like to hear bad rumors about someone and then readily spread them, being allured by gossip and idle chatter?

Do you tell lies? Do you always try to be truthful? [Do you attempt to excuse your lies by calling them mere fibs?]

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house...or anything that is your neighbor's."

Do you envy others? Envy always leads to malice and hatred and is capable of leading you to commit reckless acts, even killing.

[Brackets indicate added material.]

A BRIEF CONFESSION, COMPILED BY ARCH-BISHOP TIKHON, BASED ON A LONGER VERSION BY SAINT DMITRI OF ROSTOV

I confess to the Lord my God before thee reverend father, all my sins which I have committed up to the present day and hour, in deed, word and thought. Every day and every hour I sin through ingratitude to God for His great and numberless blessings to me and His most gracious providence and care for me, a sinner. I have sinned through:

idle talk	dozing in church
condemnation of others	saying unseemly things
scorn	laughter
insubordination	self-love
pride	love of glory
envy	love of honor
anger	gluttony
slander	love of sensual pleasure
inattention	over-eating
listlessness	drunkenness
negligence	attachment to things
carelessness	love of money
resentment	vainglory
remembering wrongs	laziness
disobedience	missing church services
acceptance of impure thoughts	neglect of prayer
lying	grumbling
self-will	concealing sins at confession
reproaching others	evil speech

I have sinned with all my senses, both spiritual and physical, wherefore I repent to the Lord and ask forgiveness. Absolve all my sins, revered father, and bless me to partake of the Mysteries of Christ.

**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.**

YOUR MOST IMPORTANT APPOINTMENT

Our busy lives are often filled with appointments. It may be at work, with a doctor or even an auto mechanic. But sometimes, these earthly meetings are cancelled or postponed. However, there is one appointment that every Christian must keep. It is more important than any other and will not be rescheduled. It is at the JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

For this, we must stand before the One Who saved us. It is an appointment for all, where no one will be excused. Just think about Who we will be meeting. Jesus is the One Who came down from heaven to save us. He endured the Cross for us. He rose for us and takes away our sins. He is always there to hear our prayers. We ought to live our lives with this important meeting in mind.

We will be standing before Someone Who knows everything about us. Nothing can be hidden from Christ; there is no way to bluff our way through this. He knows what occupies our hearts and minds. He is aware of what we read and how we manage our affairs. Are there adjustments we should make before this meeting? What changes of priorities and goals need to be done?

This important appointment is getting closer each day. A Crown of Righteousness awaits those who are willing to combine faith with action.

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