

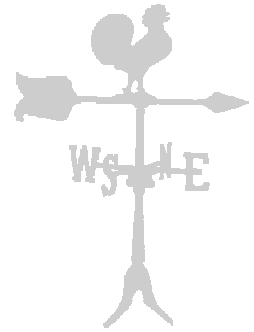
The Chanticleer

The Newsletter of



Holy Incarnation Orthodox Church

A Western Rite Vicariate mission in the Diocese of Toledo & the Midwest
The Self-ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America



+ November 2008 +

Reflection

On All Saints Day, the Church does not celebrate all those who were baptized, particularly the faithful who are still living. For the Church does not use the word "saint" lightly. Therefore, she does not refer to any or every Christian as a "saint." Rather, the word "saint" is reserved for those who have led exemplary lives of holiness. And as a mark of their holiness, these men and women would not see themselves as saints. Rather, they would see themselves as unworthy of this honor.

It is not a mark of pride, then, but a recognition of godly humility when a person is canonized (officially recognized) as a "saint." And it is a witness to all the faithful that we should strive not to be saints, but to live humbly, "soberly, and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." (Ti 2.12-13)

The greatest honor bestowed upon a saint, then, is to imitate that person's life. And there are two things in particular that we should strive to imitate so that we might worthily commemorate the saints.

First, all saints—whether known or unknown—freely confessed Christ and His unending mercy by willingly sacrificing their life. Many of the saints made this confession by spilling their blood as martyrs. Others, however, did not receive the crown of martyrdom, but nevertheless made a great confession by sacrificing all that they had and all that they were for the love of God and the love of all men.

To commemorate the saints by imitation, then, means that we adopt this same attitude of self-sacrifice; that we become willing to give up all our possessions, all our ambitions, all our desires, even our own life if necessary, in order to attain the kingdom of heaven. That is how the saints lived and died; and we honor them by living as they did.

Secondly, all saints strove not for fame, but for humility. All of them desired to be known not for their deeds or writings. Rather, they desired simply to gain true life by losing their lives in a life dedicated to repentance. For they saw themselves as unworthy of even the least of Christ's mercies, and so lived St. Paul's creed: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1 Tim 1.15)

To commemorate the saints rightly, then, means that we adopt their spirit of repentance and humility; that we strive not to impress others, but instead strive to divest ourselves of all pride and self-serving desires. To

live knowing that no one is worse than we are, that all are more deserving, and that the Lord should first save everyone else, even the worst sinner—that is the saints' spirit of humility and repentance that we should strive to imitate. And whenever we do, we truly honor them.

*Now chanticleer proclaims
each day...*

It seems reasonable that when the fourth century Spanish hymnographer, Aurelius Prudentius (Clemens), penned these words, he had in mind the advent of dawn (Tob 8.11), the reminder to "watch, therefore" (Mk 13.35) and the warning given to St Peter (Mt 26.34). At least, this is inferred both by the text of the hymn (*Ætérne rerum Cònditor*) and the fact that the Western Orthodox churches sing it throughout the year (*per annum*) at Sunday Lauds.

Let these same themes of the approaching Daystar, sober watchfulness, and the life of repentance inform not only the words that appear in this newsletter, but also the prayerful aspirations of those who read and are moved to support, in prayer or otherwise, the humble parish named for the mystery of God's union with man in Christ.

News and Notes

† With the blessing of His Grace Bishop MARK, *construction of the new Sanctuary* has begun. The new altar area will include a marble-top altar, devotional niches with icons, a permanent communion rail and an area for hearing Private Confession. "This project is designed to improve and enhance the meditative atmosphere of our liturgical space," said Fr. Fenton. In addition to the marble-top altar, solid red oak will be used for of the sanctuary and a new slate floor will be laid.

† The Feast of All Saints is *a holy day of obligation*. A "holy day of obligation" is a day all Orthodox

Holy Days of Obligation

All Sundays

Feast of the Circumcision

- ♦ 1 January

Feast of Our Lord's Ascension

- ♦ Thursday, 40 days after Easter

Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady

- ♦ 15 August

Feast of All Saints

- ♦ 1 November

Feast of the Conception of the B.V.M.

- ♦ 8 December

Feast of Our Lord's Nativity

- ♦ 25 December

Christians are obliged and expected to attend Mass and refrain from servile work (i.e., unnecessary manual labor at home or work). All Sundays are Holy Days of Obligation. In the Western tradition, six other major Feasts are also Holy Days of Obligation. *Is it too*

much to ask that parishioners make every effort to "drop everything" on 2% of the year so they can celebrate these feasts?

† *The Feast of Patriarchs & Prophets of the Old Law* will be celebrated on Saturday, 8 November. This is a major feast in our Vicariate, celebrating the various Old Testament saints. It is purposefully set on the Octave of the Feast of All Saints. All parishioners are urged to attend this Mass.

† Fr Fenton has been summoned by Bishop ANTOUN to attend *the ordinations of Kenneth DeVoie and Christopher Nerreau* at the cathedral in Worcester, Massachusetts. Mr DeVoie & Mr Nerreau will serve *two newly formed Western Rite parishes*, whose members were recently chrismated. The sacrament of ordination will be conferred on the weekend of November 21 through 23. In Fr Fenton's absence, *The Rt. Rev. John Winfrey* from St George in Grand Rapids, MI will serve Lauds and Mass on Sunday, 23 November.

† *The National Day of Thanksgiving* is not a liturgical feast. Nevertheless, as is our habit at Holy Incarnation, Mass will be celebrated on the Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving (26 November). No doubt, this would prove *a good opportunity to bring an unchurched relative or friend*.

† *The Season of Advent* begins on Sunday, 30 November. *The Advent wreath* has proved to be a worthy devotional means of encouraging godly meditation on preparation for Our Lord's Second Coming and the coming celebration of His Nativity. Purchase an Advent wreath soon, and ask Fr. Fenton about appropriate Advent devotional materials.

† *The Advent Fast* is observed this year from November 30 until December 25. As with all of the Church's fasts, the Advent fast is something

every Orthodox Christian should diligently keep. In addition to fasting from certain foods, *one should also refrain from premature celebrations of Christ Mass*. Given the world's penchant for feasting during the fasts, this can prove difficult, but also provides a God-pleasing witness to the Faith as well as a personal reminder of "the real reason for the season."

The Advent Fast

„ Fasting on all Wednesdays in Advent

„ Fasting & abstinence on all Fridays in Advent

„ Fasting & abstinence on the Ember Days

- This year: Dec 17, 19 & 20

„ Fasting & abstinence on Christ Mass Vigil (24 Dec)

SIGNIFICANT FEASTS IN NOVEMBER

1 November	All Saints
2 November	All Souls
3 November	St Raphael
8 November	Patriarchs & Prophets
11 November	St Martin of Tours
21 November	Presentation of the B.V.M.
30 November	St Andrew