

St Cyril Orthodox Church Announcements for the Week of Sunday, August 16

1. Please read the following **UPDATE ON COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS: More and more people are wanting to attend the Sunday Divine Liturgy.** That is a good thing! However, for now we are still limited to 25 people on Sunday morning, plus clergy, servers, and choir. Last Sunday, we were 13 persons over our limit.

So **we need your help** to make sure that we continue to act responsibly. If you want to attend the service, please do sign up on Signup Genius [here](#). Also, we recommend that people only sign up every other week, to give others a chance to attend. If you have trouble signing up online, please let Fr. Benedict know, and we will make sure you are signed up.

We are working to insure that the Divine Liturgy can be watched in the church hall each Sunday. **Once we reach our limit of 25 persons in the church, we will have to ask a certain number of people who have not signed up to attend in the church hall,** and then to come over to the church to receive Holy Communion at the appropriate time.

Remember when you are attending services to clean your hands on entering, wear a mask, and practice social distancing. We ask that people spread out in the church as much as possible.

Also note that there are no restrictions currently on attendance at Saturday Vespers or other weekday services.

2. **TONIGHT!** Our second **ONLINE INQUIRER CLASS** on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm, and meeting about an hour and a half. Tonight we discuss “revelation” and “holy tradition.” We will meet on the “Zoom” app. You may find the link and password for the class below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3011562302?pwd=MTZ0MVNkbWtZVHFXUTNybG9aOFdsZz09>

Meeting ID: 301 156 2302

Passcode: Cyril

5. **CONFESSION:** Please make every effort to come to Confession during the summer months, especially if you did not come during the spring due to COVID-19. Fr. Benedict is available to hear confessions on Saturdays after Vespers, and at other times by appointment.

6. **WELCOME** to our new family, Gregory and Anna Hortman, and their daughter Mary, who have recently moved to the Woodlands from southwest Houston.

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PRAYER LIST: Please remember in your prayers:

Archpriest Antonio Perdomo (Pharr, Texas); Jessica and child; Peter Afridi; Wayne Woods; Elveera Bass; Elena Myers; Edilberto Segura; Ruby Moore; Ekaterine Kandaria; James Treadway; Vladislav Price; Alexander and Helen Giannaris; Alexander; Antonio; Teddy; Anthony.

For the newly Departed: Dolores Cwik.

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Keep your mind clear during prayer

If you are truly practicing the continual prayer of silence, hoping to be with God, and you see something sensory or spiritual, within or without, be it even the image of Christ, or an angel, or some saint, or if an image of light pervades your mind, in no way accept it ... always be displeased with such images, and keep your mind clear, without image or form ... and you will suffer no harm. It has often happened that such things, even when sent by God as a test before victory, have turned into harm for many ... who have then done harm to others equally unwise ... leading to pride and self-conceit. - *St. Nilus of Sinai*

What the pandemic has done

The coronavirus pandemic has revealed how small man is, and has overthrown his apparent omnipotence. I would like to see the positives throughout this whole trial: the need to re-assess the value of the human person, to seek again for true communion with others, to thirst heartily for what we were deprived of and continue to be deprived of during this period, and to turn our hands towards Heaven in prayer, with a prayer of the heart. I would say that the virus is not a blow to the Church, but is a blow to the selfishness and arrogance of man. - *Archbishop Irenaeus of Crete*

On the value of Holy Tradition

If someone wants to be protected from tricks and remain healthy in the faith, he must confine his faith first to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and secondly to the Tradition of the Church. But someone may ask, is not the canon of Scripture sufficient for everything, and why should we add to that the authority of Tradition? This is because not everyone understands the Scriptures in the same way, but one explains them this way and another that way, so that it is possible to get from it as many thoughts as there are heads. Therefore it is necessary to be guided by the understanding of the Church ... What is tradition? It is that which has been understood by everyone, everywhere and at all times ... that which you have received, and not that which you have thought up ... So then, our job is not to lead religion where we wish it to go, but to follow it where it leads, and not to give that which is our own to our heirs, but to guard that which has been given to us. - *St. Vincent of Lerins (5th cent.)*

Do not undertake to explain the Gospels or the other books of Holy Scripture yourself. The Scriptures were not expressed arbitrarily by the Prophets and Apostles, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. How foolish then is it to explain them arbitrarily? The Holy Spirit, having expressed the Word of God through the Prophets and Apostles, explained it through the Holy Fathers. Both the Word of God and its explanation are a gift of the Holy Spirit. The holy Orthodox Church and its true children accept only this patristic interpretation! - *St. Ignatius Brianchaninov (+1867)*

Sometimes Japanese Protestants come to me and ask me to clarify some place in the Holy Scriptures. "You have your own missionary teachers," I tell them, "Go ask them. What do they say?" "We have asked them. They say: Understand it as best you can. But I need to know the real thought of God, not my own personal opinion." ...

It's not like that with us. Everything is clear, trustworthy and simple, since we accept Holy Tradition in addition to the Holy Scriptures. And Holy Tradition is a living, unbroken voice of our Church from the time of Christ and His Apostles until now, and which will exist until the end of the world. In it all the meaning of the Holy Scriptures are preserved. - *St. Nicholas of Japan*