

St. Cyril Orthodox Church

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Christ Healing the Man Blind from Birth

Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

THIS WEEKEND: The final Sunday of Pascha, the Healing of the Man Blind from Birth. Vespers Saturday at 5 pm, Divine Liturgy Sunday at 10 am.

COFFEE HOUR will resume as of this weekend! **For the summer months we will have a weekly potluck** at coffee hour. If you would like to stay for fellowship, please consider bringing a dish of your choice to contribute to the meal, enough for yourself and a few others. In this way we can keep things

simple, but also have enough food for everyone, whether we have a small group or a large group.

TUESDAY: Our final inquirer class in this series. We'll be discussing the basics of an Orthodox prayer life, the basics of fasting, an overview of the Divine Liturgy, and an overview of monasticism.

TREASURER UPDATE: Final report for May: We received \$13,911 in offerings, including the OCA grant of \$1,667 and a grant from the Diocese of the South of \$1,900. Our expenses for May were \$12,873. May Christ our Savior greatly reward all our benefactors. Next month we will probably be looking at installing **a new air conditioning unit** in the church, since our current unit is persistently having issues.

NEXT WEEK:

The Feast of the Lord's Ascension into Heaven.

Great Vespers of the Feast - Wednesday at 6:30 pm

Divine Liturgy of the Feast - Thursday at 10:00 am

Sunday, June 20 will be the Feast of Pentecost this year - also, Fathers' Day.

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On prayer in our heart

By St. Dmitri of Rostov

Man is two-fold: exterior and interior, flesh and spirit. The outer man is visible, of the flesh; but the inner man is invisible, spiritual - or what the Apostle Peter refers to as "the hidden man of the heart, which is not corruptible, a meek and quiet spirit" (1 Peter 3:4).

Our training as Christians, therefore, must also be two-fold, outer and inner; and prayer is likewise two-fold, exterior and interior. There is prayer made openly, and there is secret prayer; prayer with others, and solitary prayer. There is prayer as a duty, performed publicly according to the Church rules, together with other, at particular times - Midnight Office, Matins, Hours, Liturgy, Vespers, and Compline. These prayers, to which people are called by bells, are a suitable tribute to the King of Heaven, which must be paid every day. But voluntary prayer which is in secret has no fixed time, being made whenever you wish, simply when the Spirit moves you.

The first type of prayer, offered in the church, has an established order of troparia, psalms, canons, and other hymns; **but the other type of prayer - secret and voluntary** - is not limited in length, since it has no definite time or number of prayers. Everyone prays as he wishes, sometimes briefly, sometimes at length. The first kind of prayer is performed with the lips and voice, but the second only in spirit. The first is performed standing, but the second not only standing, but also sitting or walking or lying down - in other words, at all times. The first is performed in church with others; the second is

performed when you are alone in the shut closet, according to the word of the Lord: **“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret”** (Matthew 6:6).

This closet is also two-fold, outer and inner, material and spiritual. The material closet is constructed from wood or stone, and is always in the same place; but the spiritual closet is our heart or mind, and we carry it with us wherever we go. Wherever a man is, his heart is always with him, and so, having collected his thoughts inside his heart, he can shut himself in and pray to God in secret, whether he is talking or listening to others, in a small group or a large group. If he is in a group of people, he can still pray interiorly, since this kind of prayer does not require using our lips. All we need is to raise our mind to God, and descend deep into ourselves, and this can be done everywhere.

This inner spiritual closet within us contains God and all the kingdom of heaven, according to the Gospel words of Christ Himself: “The kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21). Explaining this, St. Macarius of Egypt writes, **“The heart is a small vessel, but all things are contained in it; God is there, the angels are there, and there also is life and the kingdom, the heavenly cities and the treasures of grace.”**

Man needs to enclose himself in the inner closet of his heart more often than he needs to go to church. Collecting all his thoughts there, he must place his mind before God, praying to Him in secret with all warmth of spirit and with living faith. At the same time he must also learn to turn his thoughts to God in such a manner as to be able to grow into a perfect man.