

Week of August 20th 2017

You can reach Fr. Luke at frlukacs@gmail.com

For emergencies, phone (315) 322-8425

Please leave a clear message and include your phone number

Next Services

Saturday, August 26th

Great Vespers at 5:00 pm

Fr. Luke is available to hear confessions following the service

Sunday, August 27th

Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

St. Olympia Chapel
123 Main Street
Potsdam, NY

All welcome!

Diocesan Youth Day
2017 Registration Form



DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS
THURSDAY AUGUST 10, 2017

For All Diocesan Youth and Friends...
from elementary to middle school, to high school, to college!

WHEN: Thursday, Aug. 24, 2017, 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM
WHERE: Six Flags Great Escape - Jackson, New Jersey
COST: \$15 per person - includes admission to Six Flags Great Escape, round trip bus transportation from St. Mary's Church (833 Glenwood Ave, Jackson, NJ) to Six Flags Great Escape, and breakfast the morning of. A Meal Voucher, worth \$13.99, will also be provided to each youth participant as a gift.

For information go to
http://www.nynjoca.org/files/2017/Youth-Day/2017_YOUTH_DAY_REGISTRATION_FORM.pdf



REGISTER NOW

For more information go to
http://support.iocc.org/site/TR?-fr_id=1170&pg=entry

2017 CHURCH SCHOOL CONFERENCE
NEW YORK STATE DEANERY

Raising Our Young People
As A Generation
of Disciples and Leaders

Conference Leader:
Very Reverend Dr. Joseph Purpura
Chairman, Department of Youth and Parish Ministries
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Saturday, August 26
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
140 Horseheads Boulevard
Elmira Heights, NY 14903
www.HolyTrinityOrthodoxChurch.org
(Lunch Included)



Diocese of New York and New Jersey
www.nynjoca.org

Sayings from the Desert Fathers

One day when Abba John the Dwarf was going up to Scetis with some other brothers, their guide lost his way for it was night time. So the brothers said to Abba John, "What shall we do, abba, in order not to die wandering about, for the brother has lost the way?" The old man said to them, "If we speak to him, he will be filed with grief and shame. But look here, I will pretend to be ill and say I cannot walk any more; then we can stay here 'till the dawn." This he did. The others said, "We will not go on either, but we will stay, too." They sat there until the dawn, and in this way they did not upset the brother.

* * *

Abba John the Dwarf said, "Who sold Joseph?" A brother replied saying, "It was his brethren." The old man said to him, "No, it was his humility which sold him, because he could have said, 'I am their brother' and have objected, but, because he kept silence, he sold himself by his humility. It is also his humility that set him up as chief in Egypt."

* * *

He gave this advice, "Watching means to sit in the cell and be always mindful of God. This is what is meant by, 'I was on the watch and God came to me.'" (Matt. 25: 36)

* * *

He also said, "A house is not built by beginning at the top and working down. You must begin with the foundations in order to reach the top." They said to him, "What does this saying mean?" He said, "The foundation is our neighbor, whom we must win, and that is the place to begin. For all the commandments of Christ depend on this one."

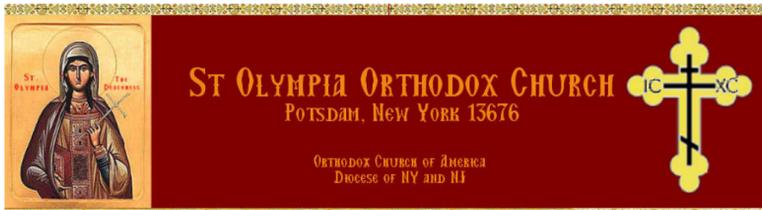
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Abba Poemen said that Abba John the Dwarf said that the saints are like a group of trees, each bearing different fruit, but watered from the same source. The practices of one saint differ from those of another, but it is the same Spirit that works in all of them.

Planning Ahead

Archbishop Michael's next visit to Potsdam will be:

Saturday-Sunday,
September 9-10, 2017



Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church, a young and, God willing, growing community of worshippers.

Join us for prayer and fellowship. Divine Liturgies are held every Sunday and are primarily in English. Fr. Luke Majoros is our presbyter.

Visit us on Facebook or www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org

Parish Rummage Sale

to benefit our building fund

Saturday, August 26th 2017, 9 am - 3 pm

SPREAD THE WORD

Invite friends, neighbors, colleagues...

ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Please contact Peggy Wheeler at pwheeler@stringpedagogy.com to let her know what days/hours you are available to help. Opportunities are:

Friday, August 25th 1 pm - 8 pm - price and organize items

Saturday, August 26th 8 am - 9 am - Set up
9 am - 3 pm - Staffing the sale
3 pm - 4 pm - Clean-up

If you are donating items, please pre-price them. Donations may be dropped off after Liturgy on August 20th or on Friday, August 25th. If these times are not convenient, contact Peggy Wheeler for an alternative.

Discipline

Note: the following article has been written by an anonymous contributor. It is included here by permission.

One supremely-touchy topic within the Church today is the topic of discipline. Our culture says that only "my feelings" and "my rights" matter; and it defines "love" as "letting me do whatever the heck I want." So the concept of discipline as the correction of wrong attitudes and wrong behaviour seems at best old-fashioned irrelevant, at worst mean and "unchristian," and most certainly as "a violation of my rights!" Well, the bad news is, as it says in James 4:4, that "friendship with the world is enmity with God." We can accept the authority of Scripture as normative, as what determines and guides our path; or we can accept the world's ever-changing, never-stable views as our rule of life. But we cannot do both; as our Lord Himself says in Matthew 6:24, "You cannot serve God and mammon." Following Jesus Christ means deliberately and purposefully choosing Christ Himself, and His Gospel. And part of choosing Christ, says Romans 12:2, is "do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." In Matthew 22:37 the Lord Jesus tells us that "the first and great commandment" is "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind," while in 1 Corinthians 2:16 St. Paul says that "we have the mind of Christ." What we choose to think, that with which we choose to fill our minds, is of crucial importance, because what we think in large part determines what we do and who we become. Therefore, the faithful proclamation of the Gospel and our open-hearted listening to it and applying it is discipline, because it does and is supposed to re-shape our thinking and behavior.

Now as we read in 1 Corinthians 4:9-16, discipline has never been absent from the life of the Church. In verses 14-16 St. Paul says, "I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you [I became your father] through the Gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me." Paul is frustrated with the Corinthians: with their divisions, their prideful spirit, their toleration of blatant immorality in their midst, and their arrogance in presuming to judge him. So he's writing this letter to try to correct their wrong thinking leading to wrong behavior.

But his aggravation is not the scream of a wounded ego. "I do not write these things to shame you, [I'm not trying to beat you down] but as my beloved children I warn you." Did you hear that? "My beloved children." To Paul, this is not simply a problem parish; it's a parish of people he loves as his own children: "For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel." Paul's zeal for the glory of God is reason enough to rebuke the Corinthians for their bad attitudes and bad behaviors. But he's also zealous for the welfare of his children. He loves them; it hurts that they're going astray; and it hurts that his children are rebelling against him. This whole Epistle is not a theological textbook but a personal letter from a worried father to his wayward children. This isn't about Paul on a power-trip; it's about really caring.

And Paul cares enough to confront. Later, in verses 19-21 he warns, "I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know [find out], not the word [the big talk] of those who are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word [just talk] but in power. What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness? Some members of the parish had been making trouble and talking big: "Who's Paul anyway? He's not so impressive. Besides, we're grown-ups; he can't talk to us like we're babies! And why hasn't he come back for a visit? Could the mighty Paul actually be scared of us?" Not hardly! The Paul who withstood Peter to his face, who got in Peter's face when he was wrong, isn't afraid of anybody. If God so allows, Paul will re-visit Corinth. And then "I will find out, not the talk of these arrogant people, but their power. For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power." Paul's not backing down.

But---and here's the grace in it all---he's not writing them off, either. He's still trying to get them to see that real wisdom and real power, the building blocks of a life truly worth living, are found only in the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. "The kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power" means that the Gospel has real power, not because it sounds nice, but because it's true and because it's accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, the power to change lives. And that's the test. What true, lasting and positive difference have these big talkers really made in anybody's life? Change, after all, is why in John 10:10 Jesus Himself says He came: "that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

Discipline by admonition has always been one of the distinctive marks of the true Church. Yes, in first place there's orthodoxy of doctrine, because Jesus Himself insists in John 8:31-32 that "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." And yes, the Holy Mysteries must be rightly administered by Bishops who are in unbroken succession from the holy apostles and in communion with the rest of the Church. But that orthodoxy of doctrine and that continued apostolic ministry must be lived. That's why we have the Sacred Canons, which are not rules or laws, but the application of Orthodox Christian teaching to specific situations in life...which necessarily means that the discipline of correcting wrong attitudes and wrong behaviors must be practiced to help individual Christians and the Body of Christ as a whole stay on track.

Well hey! Jesus preached love, right? When did He ever talk about disciplining anybody? The answer is that Jesus does give His Church the authority to discipline, and in two separate instances. In Matthew 18:15-18 He says, "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And in John 20:22-23 on that first Pascha the risen Jesus tells His apostles, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Yes, we are people being saved by Christ and clothed in His righteousness; but we're still beset with sin and human frailties. Our sins are forgiven, but not yet uprooted. We still have pride, still act out of jealousy and self-interest. We're still prejudiced in our opinions and still limited in our capacity to understand truth. So we still need correction.

Further, discipline keeps us on the right path of Christian discipleship. Following Jesus faithfully involves believing what Jesus defines as essential: that He is the Messiah, the Son of God; that He died for our sins; that He is the only way to God; that we are saved by God's grace through faith in Him. And it involves conforming to the behavior Jesus says is essential, such as loving one's neighbor, being truthful, caring for the needy, etc. For Jesus, belief and behavior are two sides of one and the same coin.

Further still, discipline makes us more mature and fruitful Christians. No one has reached the top of anything, be it art or sports or business or nothing else, without being subjected to discipline, both by others and by self. No one reaches their highest potential without being corrected and without being denied something they wanted to do. To be given the "freedom" to do whatever we want is to be condemned to mediocrity at best, and at worst to being spoiled and utterly useless brats.

Finally, discipline means that we belong to one another. We're supposed to be a community. We're supposed to be committed to helping one another in living for God. So we're supposed to take seriously what we believe and how we live. We disagree vigorously with postmodernism that truth and ethics are relative. We disagree with our culture that freedom to do whatever we want is our greatest possession. We believe that nothing is more important or more fulfilling than to know Jesus Christ and to live under His Lordship. And because of our sin and the baggage we continue to carry in our lives, we're supposed to be one another that we need support from and accountability to one another. Thus, how important we think discipline is, and how well we take to discipline, ultimately reveal what we actually believe. So: what do you and I really believe today?