

From “Our Thoughts Determine our Lives: The Life and Teachings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica”

**From Chapter Seven: On Prayer
(pages 107-108)**

The Lord is present everywhere. He lives in our hearts. That is why He said that we must love with all our heart and do everything willingly (cf. Matt. 22:37). When we seek the Lord from the heart, He is here! He is our Parent. Our parents in the flesh want our attention; they want us to return the love they have given us. But what happens? Very often we make them sorrowful. So when we seek God, we must do so from the heart. When we endeavor to do everything from the heart, then we have sincere, warm prayer, a love for our parents and neighbors, and the Lord is with us.

Every task we perform is at the same time a prayer. Our thoughts are focused on the job, and when we perform it from the heart, this means that we are doing it for God. If we think we are doing it for anybody else, we are wrong.

Prayer from the heart is sincere prayer. Always pray to the Lord from your heart. The Lord does not require philosophy from us. We should pray from the heart, as to our Father: "O Lord, help every soul, and do not forget me, either. Help everyone to find peace and to love Thee, as the angels love Thee. Give us, too, the strength to love Thee as Thy Most Holy Mother loves Thee and Thy holy angels. Give me, too, the strength to love Thee boundlessly!"

The truth is that when we men pray, we read our prayer rule without the participation of our entire being. We only pay lip service to our prayer rule. We are distracted, and of course that means that we are not praying in spirit and in truth (cf. John 4:23-24). We are only praying with our bodies and pronouncing the words with our lips, while our being is really somewhere else. Our attention is focused elsewhere, not on the words of the prayer. That is why the Holy Fathers say that vigilance and attention should always go before prayer. When we pray without attentiveness, then we are not praying in spirit and in truth, or in our thoughts. However, when we are attentive to what we ask for in prayer, we are concentrated on the words we speak and on that which we are asking for.

When we ask for help from someone who we know can help us, we turn to him earnestly and, with our whole being, beg him, "Please do this for me. I know you can do it." This means that we are convinced that he can help us, and so we ask him for help. But we often pray to God without attention, mechanically, and we consider that to be prayer, when actually our minds and hearts are not present. Our minds are elsewhere, or we are planning to do something and our thoughts are occupied with it, or our minds dwell on an insult.... Our minds are focused on many things except for prayer. That is why the Lord has said that God is spirit and that, when we pray, we must pray in spirit and in truth. This means that our spirit must be present when we pray.

To Our Visitors:

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us. Just a reminder, however: the Sacrament of Holy Communion is a manifestation of the *unity of the Body of Christ*. As such, only those who are members in spiritual good standing of the Orthodox Church – and who have prepared themselves for the Sacrament – may partake of the Holy Chalice. However, *everyone* is welcome to come up with our people at the end of the service to receive blessed bread. *Please be sure to join us at Coffee Hour following Services.*

SS CONSTANTINE & HELEN

GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL OF THE PACIFIC



December 11, 2016
11th Sunday of Luke

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December 11, 2016

11th Sunday of Luke

Commemoration of: Sebastian the Martyr & his Companions; Floros,
Bishop of Amisos; Michael the Confessor of Constantinople

Apolytikia - Entrance Hymns

Ex ipsus katilthes (Resurrection Hymn) Tone 8

En pisti tus Propatoras (Forefathers) Tone 2

By faith You justified the Forefathers, having through them betrothed to yourself the Church that came out of the nations. The saints are boasting in glory; for the glorious fruit, the Virgin who without seed gave birth to You, is from their progeny. At their entreaties, O Christ our God, save our souls.

Tu Stavru Su (Hymn of the Church) Tone 8

Having seen in the sky the form of Your Cross and, like Paul, having received his calling not from men, Your apostle among Kings, Lord, placed his reigning city in Your hand, which forever you guard in peace, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, for You alone love mankind.

Kontakion

I Parthenos simeron Tone 3

*On this day the Virgin Maid * goes to the grotto to give birth * to the pre-eternal Word * in an ineffable manner. * Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. * Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds * Him who willed that He appear as * a newborn Child, * the pre-eternal God.*

Epistle Reading Colossians 3:4-11

BRETHREN, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

Gospel Reading Luke 14:16-24

The Lord said this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to examine them; I

pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and there is still room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'

Activities & Announcements

Today

11th Sunday of Luke; Philoptochos Meeting 12 p.m.; Adult Religious Education 12 to 12:45 p.m. "Blueprints for the Little Church Series: Towards the Finish Line- Becoming Saints;" Caroling at Hale Ho Aloha ICF/SNF 1 p.m.

✦ **Results of Parish Council Elections**– Parish Council Elections took place last Sunday, December 4th. There were 5 open seats available on the Parish Council. Our candidates elected are as follows: **Roni Katsikas, John Kiladis, Trish Kiladis, Cleopatra Kritikos** and **Dimitri Nicholas**. Congratulations! The Oath of Office is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, January 8, 2017, pending ratification from our Metropolis.

This Week

- ✦ MON, 12/12– St. Spyridon, Bishop of Trymithous: Orthros 8:30 a.m., Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.
- ✦ THU, 12/15– St. Eleftherios the Priest Martyr: Orthros 8:30 a.m., Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.
- ✦ SUN, 12/18– Sunday before the Nativity;
- ✦ **Caroling Schedule**- Our choir is participating in caroling at several Senior Care Facilities in December, before Christmas. The remaining schedule is as follows: **Today, December 11, 1 p.m.**, at Hale Ho Aloha ICF/SNF 2670 Pacific Heights Road. **Sunday, December 18, 2 p.m.**, at Hale Nani Rehab. & Nursing, 1677 Pensacola Street

Upcoming Events

- ✦ **Sunday School Christmas Program**– Sunday, December 18th.
- ✦ **Christmas Choral Concert**– Sunday, December 18th, in the evening T.B.A.
- ✦ **Dance Fundraiser Workshop**– Tuesday, January 3rd, 7-9 p.m. with Bessie Grosso from Chicago– free for Dance Groups/\$10 per hour for all others
- ✦ **Epiphany Celebration & Cross Throwing** - Sunday, January 8, 2017
- ✦ **FDF Fundraiser Glendi for Dance Group**– Saturday, January 28, 2017, 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Dinner and Entertainment in Church Hall. For tickets, contact Dianna Graves or any dancer.