

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>

A few years ago, a book called "Soul Searching" investigated the spiritual lives of teenagers. It found that religion can be important to teens, but it also determined that many of them adhere to what it called "moralistic therapeutic deism." This can be defined as a belief in a kind, loving God who is not connected to any particular faith tradition, and who is there largely to help in solving personal problems.

"Souls in Transition" is author Christian Smith's follow-up to the earlier book, and it gives valuable insights into the lives of those he terms "emerging adults" between the ages of 18 and 23. Emerging adults marry relatively late, may spend several years in higher education, and rarely stay for decades at the same job because of the unreliable global economy. Many are unaffiliated with any institution, and have no commitment to a worshipping community.

So which, if any, of these emerging adults might make or keep a commitment to faith? Smith answers that it is those who, as teenagers, had examples of older people who practiced their faith. There are other factors (such as prayer, reading of Scripture, multiple religious experiences and the absence of strong doubts in the teen years) but the example of practiced faith is the strongest indicator of future commitment. Teens who have had no such example are unlikely to develop their spiritual lives as emerging adults, and will probably follow the societal trend of indifference, and sometimes hostility, to faith.

Smith rejects the idea that parents (or adult caretakers) become less significant in their children's lives during the teen years. In fact, parents' perception that their children don't want them to promote or "impose" religious beliefs, and their resulting fear of doing so, leaves the teens "floating in a directionless murk to figure out completely on their own some of life's most basic questions concerning reality, truth, goodness, value, morality and identity." It isn't that these children don't want their parents' involvement, Smith says. It's rather that they want it on "renegotiated" terms that "take seriously their growing maturity and desired independence."

Not only teens, but also the emerging adults who are the subject of this book benefit from the counsel, mentoring and simple presence of caring older people. Smith calls on the churches in America to recognize the unsettled and often disconnected years of emerging adulthood as a fairly new phenomenon in our fast-changing culture. Churches should create ways to reach out to emerging adults, just as they have created ways to reach out to other groups such as the elderly and families with young children.

But it really begins in the teen years, and well before. Children need relationships with adult faith models. Smith, being interviewed about "Souls in Transition," put it this way: "The most important factor is parents. For better or worse, parents are tremendously important in shaping their children's faith trajectories. That's the story that came out in "Soul Searching." It's also the story that comes out here."

SS CONSTANTINE & HELEN

GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL OF THE PACIFIC



SEPTEMBER 4, 2016

11TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

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SEPTEMBER 4, 2016

11TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

Commemoration of: Hieromartyr Babylas; Prophet Moses;

Apolytikia - Entrance Hymns

Ote katilthes (Hymn of the Day) Tone 2

Tu Stavru su ton tipon (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 you guard in peace forever, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, for You alone love mankind.

Kontakion Tone 2

Ioakim ke Anna
Both Joachim and Anna from their sterility's stigma, and Adam and Eve from their mortality's ruin have been set free, O immaculate Maid, by your holy nativity. For this do your people hold celebration, redeemed from the guilt of transgression as they cry to you, "The barren one bears the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life."

Epistle Reading 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

BRETHREN, you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

Gospel Reading Matthew 18:23-35

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with

me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailors, till he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to everyone of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Today

✠ SUN, 9/4– *11th Sunday of Matthew; Memorial for Dimitra & Anastasios Gacis, and Eleni & Haralambos; Sunday School Blessings of the Waters; Post-Festival Celebration; Sunday School Teachers Meeting*

This Week

✠ MON, 9/5– Offices closed in observance of LABOR DAY
✠ THU, 9/8– *Nativity of the Theotokos: Orthros 8:30 a.m., Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.; Parish Council Meeting 5:30 p.m.*
✠ SAT, 9/10– *Post-Festival Church Tours 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.*
✠ SUN, 9/11– *Sunday Before Holy Cross; Philoptochos Meeting 12 p.m.*

Pearls of Wisdom from the Holy Fathers

"Two gifts God gave to men, by which they may be saved and delivered from all the passions of the old man: humility and obedience. Bend your neck to humility and obedience and you will receive mercy. If you practice with humility and obedience what you hear from the Fathers, God will grant you His blessed help not only in the work you are doing, but will make all your works successful, for He protects the path of those who fear Him and watches over their progress."

~ St. Barsanuphius the Great

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.