St. John The Baptist
Greek Orthodox Church
14485 SW Walker Road
Beaverton OR 97006

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25 years in the Priesthood!

The Parish of St John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

Invites you to a Recognition Dinner in honor of

Reverend Father Theodore Dorrance

to celebrate his 25th Anniversary to the Priesthood

Sunday, September 25, 2016

Langdon Farms Golf Club
24377 Airport RD NE
Aurora, Or. 97002

Semi-Formal Atttire

5:00 p.m. – No Host Cocktails 6:00 p.m. – Dinner & Program

$55.00

RSVP

Pay online: www.stjohngoc.org

Contacts for questions or gift donation opportunities:
Patricia Poulos – 503.515.5353 kevi117@comcast.net
Eva Walters – 503.508.8619 swalters7948@comcast.net

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
Bringing Orthodox Christianity to the Portland Westside and Beaverton Area

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA * METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

Witnessing the Truth of Apostolic Christianity

September 2016
VOL. X1X NO. 8

14485 SW Walker Road
Beaverton, Oregon 97006
Office: 503.644.7444 Fax: 503.296.2507
E-mail: churchoffice@stjohngoc.org
Parish Website: stjohngoc.org

A TIME TO TRANSITION

September is a month of transitioning from the close of some things and the beginning of others. We transition from summer to fall, from vacations to putting our nose to the grindstone, and from kids having time off to beginning a new school year. There are often mixed emotions regarding these. Some people are sad to see the sunny, warm days fade away. Others would love to have more vacation time visiting family and friends and most children are not eager to start another school year. As things start to pick up, our minds become inundated with thoughts about all we need to do as we make these transitions. During this month, it's easy to lose sight of another transition, the start of a new Ecclesiastical year. In the midst of our own clamoring about, the Church subtly has her own transition. Having celebrated the Dormition of the Mother of God in mid August, the Church is already preparing for a new year, September 1st, and its first major Feast Day, the Birth of the Mother of God on September 8th.

In our day-to-day life we have many thoughts swimming through our head; work, children, finances, health, etc. Some experts estimate that the average person has around 45 thoughts per minute, which is mind-boggling, no pun intended. The point is, we can entertain a lot of thoughts in a day as our minds become occupied with many things. Within the Orthodox tradition, primarily our spiritual literature, we are taught to "manage" our thoughts by narrowing them down to just a few, with special attention given to one thought or rather one phrase, "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." St. Paisios of the Holy Mountain use to say that thoughts are like planes that fly above us, you can see them, you know they're there, but don't give them a place to land. That is to say, though we will have a lot of thoughts, it's best not to engage them because they simply become a distraction for us as we attempt to be "God conscience" throughout the day. This is quite a challenge for most of us, because we are so inundated with information, and typically have so many things going on each day. In this, we can easily lose sight of the "one thing needful" (cf. Lk. 10:42).

As Orthodox Christians, being "God conscience" is an important goal. One sign of spiritual maturity is when a person thinks of Christ most of the time. Managing thoughts in such a way so as to not surrender the mind to meaningless, troubling or disturbing thoughts is an ascetic endeavor that all of us need to embrace if we wish to progress on the spiritual path of purity of heart. St. Paul emphasized the importance of managing thoughts in his letter to the Philippians when he said, "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things (4:8). In other words, don't surrender your mind to just any and every thought that comes along, but choose wisely what you allow your mind to dwell on.

One way that the Orthodox Church assists us in this endeavor is through the Feast days of the Ecclesiastical year. These feasts are placed throughout the calendar year in such a way so as to help us be mindful of the salvific events of our Lord Jesus Christ. Like anything, however, having something available to us does no good if we do not make some effort to engage what's being provided, and the Feast days of the Church are no exception. As we begin the New Ecclesiastical Year, I encourage all of you to think in terms of the "living through" the Festal Cycle of the Church. That is to say, living from feast day to feast day, being consciously aware of each Feast prior to it happening, and more fully during its observance. We begin this cycle of major Feast Days with September 8th, the Feast of the Birth of the Mother of God and September 14th, the Feast of the Elevation of the Precious Cross. For your convenience I have listed the Major Feast Days of the Church, those of Christ and the Theotokos. Part of developing a life that has at it's center the Major Feast Days of the Church is preparing for them ahead of time through fasting (if the Church calls for this), by reading about them prior to attending, and, of course, by attending the services when they are offered.

Here are the Major Feast Days of the Church

Sept. 8	Nativity of the Theotokos
Sept. 14	Elevation of the Precious Cross
Nov. 21	Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple
Dec. 25	Nativity of Christ
Jan. 6	Theophany of Christ

Father's Message continued on Page 5

MANY YEARS! XPONIA POLLA! MANY YEARS!

.....to those celebrating their Feastdays in September:

.....to those celebraing their namedays in September:

September 1– 40 Virgin Martyrs
Athena Gonzales
Margariet Maletis
Presvytera Stacey (Aspasia) Dorrance
Theonie Gilmore
September 3 – St. Edward of Wales
Fr. Edward Hillhouse
September 5 – Sts. Zacharias & Elizabeth
Lisa (Elisabeth) Corazza
September 7 –St. Kassiani
Kassiani Crosby
September 8 – Nativity of the Theotokos
Anne Marie Powell
Miriam Powell
All those named Maria
September 9 – Sts. Joachim and Anna
Jennifer (Anna) Rich
Jill Ann Hudanish
Pascale (Anna) Rich
September 11– St. Evanthea
Evanthea Pavlatos
September 14 – Exaltation of the Cross
Lyndy (Stavroula) Martushev
Steven (Stavros) Tatum
Sept. 17 –Sts. Sophia, Faith, Hope & Agape
Agape Ketrenos
Linda (Faith) Weick
Sophie Becker
Tiffany (Hope) Morgan
Barbara (Sophia) Carper
September 20 – St. Efstathios
Erica (Evstathia)Wilson
Stathia Davis
Sept. 24 – Sts. Silouan of Mt. Athos & Thekia
Jaaron (Silouan) Smith
Karen (Thekla) Keese
Sept. 25 –St. Evphrosyne & St Sergius of Radonezh
Evphrosyne McKenzie
Fran (Evphrosyne) Williams
Sergius McKenzie
September 26 – St. John the Theologan
Jon Corazza
Nicolai (John) Martushev
Theodore (John) Duchow-Pressly
Sr. Theologia Whitton

...to those celebrating Wedding Anniversaries:

Robert & Jessie Crosby - 9 years on Sept 1st
Michael & Christian Hillier - 4 years on Sept 2nd
Michael & Joanne Finicle - 29 years on Sept 5th
Peter & Kathryne Psihogios - 6 years on Sept 11th
Neal & Diane Perlmutter - 44 years on Sept 16th
Jeff & Patrice Jones - 2 years on Sept 20th
Daniel & Christy Sumerfield - 9 years on Sept.23rd
Michael & Jodi Hailey - 16 yrs on Sept 23rd
Petros & Susan Bournelis - 45 years on Sept 24th
Ron & Jennifer Rich - 27 years on Sept 30th

Memory Eternal:

Nikitas Sardis.-12 years on August 8th

***Please notify the church office if your feast or anniversary was not listed**

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Theodore L. Dorrance, Priest
Rev. Fr. Timothy Pavlatos, Priest
Fr. Innocent Duchow-Pressley, Deacon

2016 Parish Council
John Davis, *President*
Kent Taylor, *Vice President*
Gregory Walsh, *Secretary*
Karen Keese, *Treasurer*
Niko Poulos, *Stewardship Chair*
Erik Chosvig
Robert Crosby
Arthur "Ted" Deming
Mark Lindgren
Demetri Mirras
Steve Roth
Joe Weick

Sunday School
Jessie Crosby

Logos Bookstore
Agape Ketrenos - Director
Paraskevi Whitton - Co-Director

Philoptochos
Eleni Goldman - *President*
Sandy Duchow-Pressley - *Vice President*
Colleen Van Sickle - *Treasurer*
Pres. Stacey Dorrance - *Membership*

Hospitality
Stephanie Makarounis
Patricia Poulos

Moms & Tots
Athena Gonzales
Kendall Muzik

Church Music
Presvytera Stacey Dorrance

Altar Boys
Tobias Armstrong
Demetrius Van Sickle
Barry Ketrenos
Dn. Innocent Duchow-Pressley

Bookkeeping
Kathleen Ketrenos

Parish Administrator
Barbara Coert

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
Articles & Announcements
Due by the 2nd Friday of every month

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

We continue to be in the "Assessment," or information gathering stage, of our strategic planning process. It may seem like this step is taking a long time – and it is! That is because it is so important to gather the information that will be the foundation of our Strategic Plan.

The assessment subcommittee has been working very hard on developing our "homegrown" survey. That is the survey that we will ask everyone in the parish to participate in. In making the homegrown survey, they are utilizing the ONCD survey results to help identify areas where we want to learn more and other surveys that other Orthodox parishes have used. They are using this material to develop specific areas we want to learn more about and then specific questions that will help us gather that information. Our last Strategic Planning leadership meeting was very engaging as we reviewed the draft material – there is just so much opportunity for us to learn more about our parish.

We are expecting this survey will be ready in 4-6 weeks. We will be utilizing an on-line format and we will make arrangements any parishioners who don't have computer or internet access to be able to participate.

As we noted last month, we will share the results of both surveys, prior to the parish-wide workshop (still targeting later this fall), so all parishioners have a common understanding of what we've learned so far.✣

By Kent Taylor

STEWARDSHIP

The Stewardship of Philotimo

In our lives as Orthodox Christians, we understand that all we are and all we have come to us as a blessing from God. We often think about our stewardship in terms of our material possessions, but we are also responsible and accountable to God for our attitudes, our inner dispositions and even the virtues with which we adorn our souls. One very important disposition that the especially the Greek Fathers speak about is *philotimo*. This Greek word is nearly impossible to translate with an equivalent English word. It is one of those words so rich in meaning that we need several paragraphs to properly understand its meaning. I pray that the following explanation by St. Paisios of this godly attribute and way of being can become our own as we diligently work to cultivate philotimo in our lives

Philotimo, according to St Paisios, means "the reverent distillation of goodness; the radiant love of the humble man bereft of himself, but with a heart full of gratitude to God and his fellow man; because of his spiritual sensitivity he tries to repay even the slightest good that others do to him." St Paisios said the following about philotimo:

"Those who have philotimo, because they move within the heavenly sphere of doxology, joyfully accept their trials as well as their blessings, and glorify God for them. Thus, they are continuously receiving God's blessing from everything and are melting internally out of gratitude towards God, which they express in every spiritual way possible, like children of God."

"Unfortunately, in our day, words and books have multiplied and experiences have diminished, because the worldly spirit, which pursues all conveniences and avoids all bodily effort, influences people. Most of us find rest in much reading but little or no implementation. We simply marvel at the holy athletes of our Church without realizing how much they've labored, for we have not toiled so as to be able to understand their toil, to love them and to struggle out of philotimo in order to imitate them."

"Those, however, who struggle with philotimo and do not give themselves rest, removing their egos from every one of their actions, help very positively. For only then are the souls in need of help given rest, and then will their own souls find inner rest, in this life as well as in eternity."

"When one realizes one's sinfulness and great mercy of God, the heart cracks, as hard as it may be, and real tears fall of themselves and then man prays and weeps without effort. This is because humility works continuously together with philotimo and drills on the heart so that the springs increase, and the hand of God continually strokes the hard-working and philotimo child." ✣

Article Provided by Colleen VanSickle

Greek Festivals
Sept. 24th
Holy Apostles Church, Vancouver-11 am
Sept. 30th-Oct.2nd
Holy Trinity Cathedral, Portland

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Dearest Parish Family-

We have just finished up the third and final fundraiser in our annual rotation. It's been quite a year! Your fundraising ministry chairs, Sam and Thomaida, want to thank each and everyone one of you.

No seriously. Thank you: Charity, John and Jennifer, John and Patricia, Niko and Athanasia, Liz and family, Theonie, Cory, Nika, Katherine, Christina, Sandy, Kathryn, Michael and Sophie, Kendall, Mark, Theonie, Sarah, Lois, Sylvia, Carmen, Renate, Vicki, Kristi, Lauri, Mamo, Patrick, Diane, Cory, Jimmy, Eleni and Norm, Patrice and Jeff, Diane, Paul and Arielle, Robert and Jessie, Craig (from the Salem Mission), Chris and every Chili Cook-Off contestant, everyone who came to just eat chili, Cindy, Jon and Lisa, Lukas, every Goyan that helped, Rachel and Seraphim, Lia, the parking lot attendant volunteers from the Cook-Off, everyone who prays for this ministry, Meika, Eric, Helen, Colleen, Beth and Steve, Clayton and Sara, Beth, Jennifer, Greg and Jillian, Barry and Agape, Shannon and family, Billy, Demetri and Nia, Paraskevi and Rich, every volunteer who assembled Take n Bake, Pres Stacey, Athena, every volunteer who cleaned up after the Cook-Off, every person who sold Take n Bake, yeah we are spending an entire paragraph and because it's worth it to name each of you! We know we're probably forgetting some folks, so please forgive us and know that you are so appreciated and we could never do this without you!

This year we raised $16,500. That is amazing!! We should be so proud of ourselves, the work we accomplished together and our perseverance. This September, we start our rotation over again with Take n Bake. Mark your calendars for the Chili Cook-Off on Sunday, February 17th. Start cooking up your A-game so you can try to beat out the winning recipes of Christina, Deacon and Kris! Then, in Summer 2017, we head out for another Festival Food Booth. And guess what? It's going to be better! We learned so much and all of the volunteers put down some serious foundation to build on. Be on the lookout for Take n Bake sign ups and if you're interested in helping plan and make our Chili Cook-Off better than last year, please reach out to Sam or Thomaida.

May God continue to bless our efforts as we start our second fundraising year!✣ Sam and Thomaida

The Beaverton Night Market food booth, as shown on the left, was a lot of fun and a fundraising success!

Please Join Us

Take 'n' Bake Assembly

Please sign up for one or two 2-hour shifts.

Th	Sept 8	9:45a-12p	Walnuts & Butter	Christina
Tu	Sept 13	11a-3p	Baklava	Jen. B
Th	Sept 15	9a-12p	Spanakopita Prep	Paraskevi & Christina
Fri	Sept 16	9a-3p	Spanakopita	Stacey & Paraskevi
Tu	Sept 20	5p-9p	Baklava	Jen B.
Tu	Sept 27	11a-3p	Tyropita	Sandy

Watch your e-mail for Online Sign-ups.

All are welcome.

Questions? Christina B. leads the Take 'n Bake team

St. John Take 'n' Bake

DATES

Pre-order September 1st - October 15th
Pick-up November 1st-15th

3 Delicious Greek Foods

Each item comes in a 7" x 11" pan, frozen and ready to bake for an instant taste of the Mediterranean. Made with love in the St. John the Baptist kitchen.

Tyropita - $22
A savory blend of three cheeses in flaky pastry from the kitchen of Yiayia Mina.

Spanakopita - $22
A classic combo of spinach and cheese filling in buttery pastry inspired by the recipe of Presvytera Ava.

Baklava - $25
A rich dessert of walnuts, butter and cinnamon from the Anasis family recipe. Instructions for easy sugar syrup included.

THREE WAYS TO ORDER:

1. At Coffee Hour (Cash, Check, and Credit Cards Accepted)
2. With a St. John Parishioner (Cash or Check Only)
3. Online at www.stjohngoe.org (Credit Cards Only)

All proceeds go to the Building Fund to help fulfill our parish vision to build a Byzantine-style Orthodox Christian church and supporting facilities on Portland's westside. Learn more at www.stjohngoe.org.

St John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is at 14485 SW Walker Road in Beaverton, Oregon.

LOGOS BOOKSTORE BOOK REVIEW

On the Providence of God

by St. John Chrysostom

Not often are we able to wait out a trial without having a lot to say about how we are suffering. We might think that we understand this to be God's will, because He has a greater plan for us. In the same way, we might feel bad for the circumstances of others. We might try to see God's will in all that is happening to our friends. But, if we are being honest, most of us struggle and have questions in the midst of trials. We might think that it is not supposed to be this way; and wonder why is this happening. Too often, we can become scandalized by our own behavior or the behavior of others, because of our doubts. It was not until I read this simple book containing St John Chrysostom's homilies on the providence of God that I realized how very far off the mark I was when I tried to accept or understand the providence of God.

As I read through chapter ten, How the Ancients Awaited the End of Events, it was as if I was smacked in the head. "Eva, what have you been thinking about?" I found myself saying, "Seriously, you whine about how busy you are, cry about lack of time, sigh about too much going on – this is not waiting out the events of your life as the ancients did. It's really about being scandalized about how you are not getting your own way and not accepting the providence of God without questions." Wow!

Think about these words from the Golden Mouth Chrysostom, doctor of the Church, as he tells us about Abraham's reaction to being told to sacrifice his son. It was really revealing to me. "*And he especially glorified God by not being inquisitive, by not inquiring curiously, but by yielding to the incomprehensibility of His wisdom and His power, and not at all doubting what had been said. You see that this is how to especially glorify God – to always yield to the incomprehensibility of His providence and His unspeakable power and wisdom, and not to be inquisitive, not to inquire curiously, not to say, "Why is this? What is this for? How will this be?*" St. John Chrysostom goes on to remind us that there were several very important points that many of us would have gotten completely hung up on when asked to do such a thing as sacrifice our child. First, there was the command itself. Really, the God of good is going to tell me to do such a thing? Isn't this completely in conflict with the Ten Commandments? Second, the love of our children is one of the greatest blessings the Lord gives us, yet Abraham was asked to defy the natural instincts we have for this love and kill his son. Third, the son was given to Abraham even though it was naturally impossible for this to happen; it was truly a miracle of God. Finally, God had told Abraham, "*Thy seed shall be as numerous as the stars of heaven.*" Killing the son, the ONLY son, made these words of God impossible. Given all of this, the "righteous man was not scandalized." It never occurred to Abraham to disobey God and not kill his son. According to Chrysostom, Abraham actually did kill his son, because he did not falter. He did not question the Lord, did not ask why. He completely understood that this was God's will and did not even contemplate the reality, putting 100% of his existence in the Lord's Hands. It was only God who stopped him; Abraham never thought that he would be stopped.

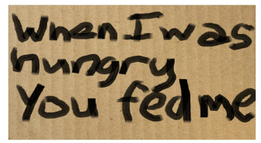
Today, we would think that the blessed Abraham was completely crazy, lock him away and throw away the key. Ok, now here is the part where I got smacked on the side of my head. "*…Compare these events with those that have taken place now, and you will see your faintheartedness and the low estate of those who are scandalized. You will clearly understand that scandal does not arise in you from any other source then from* ***not yielding to God's incomprehensible providence, but always seeking out the manner of God's dispensation, demanding to know the cause of event, and inquiring curiously into every single thing.***" Ouch! Now we know why Abraham was able to actually kill his son.

This little book is full of insight. Buy it at the bookstore and see if you can get smacked along the side of your head too…it only hurts for a little while. Then you too can wakeup and take another look at your life and find out that you can always use a little help navigating the straight and narrow path. Being so busy? It's really not so bad anymore! ✣ by: Eva Walters

We are putting together a **Slide Presentation** for the Celebration of Father Theodore's 25th Anniversary to the Priesthood. We hope you are able to attend! **Kindly send a few photos** that you may have of your family at church functions, or of your family members with Father, new or old.

Please send them to Agape at **agape@ketrenos.com**

GRAB & GIVE BAGS



Last August, St. John the Baptist launched an ongoing ministry called "Grab and Give Bags" in an effort to provide sustenance for the many homeless people we see in our community. These gallon bags are filled with a few non-perishable food items, a water bottle, and an encouraging scripture verse. Parishioners sign up to make a stock of bags at their own expense and put them in a basket in the parish hall. From there, anyone can take a bag or two for their cars to have on hand when they see someone in need.

In this past year, we have made 269 of these bags, or about 22 a month! It is my hope that the majority of these have made it out from under the seat of our cars and into the hands of a person in need. Thank you so much to all who have participated, especially those of you who have involved your children in either making or distributing these gifts!

I love these bags! First of all, this effort is a ministry of our parish that directly benefits the community outside of our church. We have an opportunity to do good in the world and not just for each other! Secondly, food is a great thing to give away! It meets an immediate physical need and there is very little doubt about how it will be used. Finally, since anyone at church can take the bags, those in our parish struggling to make ends meet still have a way to give to those in greater need without using their own resources!

Parents, if you are wondering how to teach your children to be merciful, this is an easy way to start without needing to lecture. Involve them in whatever part of this process makes sense for their abilities and then discuss with them the "why". You may be showing them to think beyond themselves, or you may be surprised to find they already have a heart for helping the poor.
In order to keep this going throughout the next year, we need more volunteers to sign up to make a supply of bags. The bags cost about $3.00 each to make, but there is no production quota. Anyone can give as they are willing and able. We want to continue to grow this ministry. If you have any questions or if you can help just email me at **jilliankehr3@gmail.com.**✣

CAMP ANGELOS 2016

This summer, I had the tremendous blessing of being a leader at Camp Angelos, off the Sandy River. It is a five-day Orthodox summer camp for children 3rd-12th grade, organized by Holy Trinity Cathedral. Many Orthodox parishes in the area participate each year, and this year, we had 20 campers from St. John! Half of the Staff were also from our parish, including: Chris Perlmutter, Karen Keese, Katherine Braden, Pres. Stacey, Father Theodore, and your truly. This camp helps our children connect and get to know other Orthodox kids, grow closer to each other and grow closer to Christ. To share a little bit of the camp experience, several of our youth answered a short survey.

What was your favorite thing about camp and why?

"I loved the Greek dancing!! Why? It's Greek dancing. No other explanation is needed. I also liked the singing. Scratch that. I loved the singing and theater, and I also enjoyed arts and crafts." - Fevronia V

"My favorite thing about camp was campfire. I liked it because it was fun to see everyone laughing and having a great time. The songs were so weird and fun that you would never sing them in the light, but in the dark nobody cares." - Hannah F

"Sports, because we played a lot of games I haven't played anywhere else."- Noah F

"Costumes"- Wade C

"Water day, because the water slide was really fun and I got free time to hang out with my friends. And, I also ate some delicious snow cones" - Azrael P

Why do you think camp is important?

"Camp is important because it gives us a chance to disconnect from the world, and be in a place we know is safe…really getting a chance to connect to God and learn more about our faith" - Gabriella

"To grow closer to God." – Constantine V

"It teaches us about Orthodoxy, while having fun, playing games and other activities." - Emelia C

What spiritual things did you take away from camp?

"How to be calm when you're not, and that after asking something of God don't forget to thank Him as well." - Anysia

"That we always have a chance for redemption. And that God will always forgive us, and give us a second chance no matter what. And that he's always there for us." -Gabriella P

"Say more prayers" - Stathi D

"That we need God in our lives"- Noah F

Do you want to go to camp next year and if so why?

"Yes, I want to go back next year because some of the girls I see only once a year and I love all the rotations and how much I learn from them." - Hannah F

YES! Because it's the best thing ever, and it's my favorite part of summer" - Azrael P

"Yes, because it is fun.- Petros B"

"YES! Yes and yes. Because of all of the above."- Fevronia V

For those of us working in different Youth ministries, it is our goal to partner with families to help train children in the faith and to help them start personal relationships with God and the Saints. We had a wonderful year at camp with your children and hope to see them all next year!! ✣ By Beth Carper

Youth Choir Begins!

Sunday, September 11th
during Post-Communion prayers

All 4th -12th graders
who love Chanting and Singing are welcome to join!

Father's Message continued

Feb.2	Presentation of Christ into the Temple
Mar. 25	Annunciation of the Theotokos
Palm Sunday	Our Lord's Entrance in Jerusalem
Ascension	40 days after Pascha
Pentecost	50 days after Pascha
Aug. 6	Transfiguration of Christ
Aug. 15	Dormition of the Theotokos

Practical suggestions for observing these Festal days:

1. Over time, obtain an icon of each of the Major Feast Days. The icons don't need to be full size, a 5x7 will be fine.
2. Place the icon on a stand in a prominent place in your home a few days before, on and after the feast day so it can be seen by everyone in the home
3. Have a small vigil lamp in front of the icon. You can burn olive oil or if you prefer use a vigil lamp that is electric. Some people have safety concerns about a live flame.
4. Learn something about the Feast each year. There is a lot to learn about each one.
5. Learn the hymn for that Feast.
6. Attend the services dedicated to the Feast (Great Vespers, Orthros & Liturgy).

Living from Feast Day to Feast Day has to be intentional and a priority, otherwise year after year will pass and we won't engage them in meaningful and edifying ways. One note of caution, don't force this practice on anyone else. Strive to do this yourself. We can all get a zealous streak in us and we want EVERYONE to jump on board. Not everyone will be where you are though, and so it's better to do this because of your love for Christ and because you want to be transformed by these feasts. Let your transformation speak for you, that way you won't have to use words to "convince" others to join you (cf. Mt. 5:16). May all of you have a blessed year of joy, good health, and spiritual growth!✣

With love in Christ, Fr. Timothy

PROSFORA BAKING PRIVILEGE

Of all the things that we can do, the most essential are worshipping God and offering Him our prayer and thanksgiving. Having the opportunity to make Prosphora helps us in a focused way to worship, pray and offer thanksgiving. When we make Prosphora, which means offering or bringing, we are actively offering back to God, that which He has given us; and through the making of the bread we also offer thanksgiving, prayer and worship.

We offer thanksgiving by realizing that everything comes from God. The wheat, the salt, the yeast, the water and everything else we are blessed with, including our utensils, pans and ovens; without which we could not make our bread offering. We offer thanksgiving for having the willingness, the opportunity, the strength and the forcefulness to make the bread even when we are busy or tired, because it requires our will aligning with God's will as an intentional, sacrificial response to do so.

We are offering prayer as we are making the bread. "Please Lord, help me to focus on You and what you have offered to me and all of humanity through this bread which will become your Body. Please Lord God, receive this bread from these unworthy hands which struggle to do any good thing on this earth. Please Lord, cover my sins as I am making this bread which will become your sinless Body. Please Lord Jesus, help me to knead in my love for you and that of my family, as we ever more deeply realize our great and endless need for You."

We worship God through our willingness to glorify Him by preparing our Prosphora and offering it on behalf of ourselves, our family, and our entire church family. We worship God by acknowledging Him as Lord King and God, our Savior and Redeemer, our Light and Life. We worship God through our offering of the Prosphora themselves, because they would not be necessary if it were not for His sacrificial love and outpouring of Himself on the Cross for the salvation of myself, my family, my church family and for all of humanity.

How great is our God! He blesses us with the opportunity to use what He has given us, so that we weak sinners can offer it back to Him to be used in the Holy Offering of Himself as the Lamb, to be sacrificed for our sake. When the bread we offer is placed on the altar, it is we too who are placing ourselves on the altar of sacrifice, offering ourselves to God, giving Him our all to be used by Him as He so deems. Not only myself and my family who have offered the Prosphora, but all of us in the congregation are being offered to God as a living sacrifice through this bread as the Apostle Paul calls us to do: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your liturgical service." (Rom.12:1)

The placing of the Prosphora on the Paten is not just the bread my family is offering on behalf of the entire congregation, it is the bread that will be used for those faithful living and for those departed. The bread that is being offered will be used to offer the Lamb, the Holy Oblation. And, with the Lamb, an offering of the bread for the Theotokos, the Heavenly Host, all the Saints and all the Kingdom on both sides of this life. The bread we bake and offer becomes the Lord's Body and with the wine that is offered becoming His Blood, the Holy Chalice will contain our God and our Salvation! The very Body and Blood of Christ, will be given individually, by name, to each person who offers themselves before Christ Jesus as they approach the Holy Chalice. ✣ By Paraskevi Whitton

Men's Breakfast

Spiritual Discussion by Fr Timothy
Saturday, September 10th at 8:30 am.

It is open to all men.
No need to RSVP, just show up!
Please bring $5 to cover the cost of food

men at work

Men's Fall Work Trip to the Monastery in Goldendale
September 30th-October 1st
See Gregory Walsh or Deacon Innocent to sign up or more info.