

THE ORDER FOR THE READER TYPIKA SERVICE
WHEN WE ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH

SUNDAY JANUARY 24, 2021

33rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 8. New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. Ven. Xenia of Rome and her two female servants (5th c.). St. Gerásim, Bishop of Perm (1441). Martyr John of Kazan’ (1529). Martyrs Babylas (Vavíla) of Sicily, and his two disciples: Timothy and Agapius (3rd c.). St. Macedonius, Hermit, of Syria (ca. 420). Uncovering of the relics of Saint Anastasios the Persian (7th c.). Ven. Dionysius of Olympus (16th c.). Ven. Philotheus, founder of Philotheou Monastery (Mt. Athos – 10th c.). Bl. Xenia of St. Petersburg (19th c.).

THE SERVICE TAKES PLACE IN FRONT OF OUR ICON CORNER

EVERYONE: O, God cleanse me a sinner and have mercy on me! (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. O, Heavenly King, the Comforter the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life. Come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy Name’s sake.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the Singing of the First Antiphon.

Bless the Lord, O my soul! Blessed are Thou, O Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and of great goodness. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Blessed art Thou, O Lord!

THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon.

The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Second Antiphon.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have being. Put not your trust in princes, in sons of men in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs he returns to his earth, on that very day his plans perish. The Lord will reign forever; Your God, O Zion, to all generation.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, Who for our salvation didst will to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, Who without change didst become man and wast crucified, Who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, save us!

THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon.

The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Third Antiphon.

In Thy Kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

Followed by the singing of the appointed Troparia for the day:

TROPAR FOR THE RESURRECTION, TONE 8

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!// O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and Ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

TROPAR FOR THE HOLY NEW MARTYRS OF RUSSIA, TONE 4

Today the Church of Russia forms a chorus in joy, praising her new martyrs and confessors; hierarchs and priests, royal passion-bearers, right-believing princes and princesses, venerable men and women, and all Orthodox Christians. Having laid down their life for faith in Christ during the days of godless persecution, they preserved the truth by the shedding of blood.// By their protection, O long-suffering Lord, preserve our land in Orthodoxy till the end of the age.

THE EPISTLE LESSON

READER: The Prokeimenon is in the 8th Tone:

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God!

CHOIR: *Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God!*

READER: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel.

CHOIR: *Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God!*

READER: Pray and make your vows!

CHOIR: *Before the Lord, our God!*

READER: THE READING IS FROM THE EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS.

READER: *Colossians 3:4-11*

Brethren:

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

READER: And to your spirit: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE GOSPEL LESSON

READER: And that we may be accounted worthy of hearing the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

EVERYONE: Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Let us listen to the Holy Gospel. The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke.

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

READER: *Luke 18:35-43*

Let us Attend!

Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant.

So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight."

Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well."

And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

READER: Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.

Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.

Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.

**THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen.

READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

READER: Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be put to shame.

READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

READER: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

READER: The Choir of Holy Angels and Archangels, with all the Powers of Heaven, sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

THE SYMBOL OF FAITH (THE NICENE CREED)

EVERYONE: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of light; true God of true God, begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And the third day He arose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us and save us.

EVERYONE: Amen. (Followed by the singing of the appointed Kontakia)

KONTAKION FOR THE RESURRECTION, TONE 8

By rising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam. Eve exults in Thy Resurrection,// and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

KONTAKION FOR THE HOLY NEW MARTYRS OF RUSSIA, TONE 3

Today the new martyrs of Rus' stand in white robes before the Lamb of God, and with the angels they sing to God the hymn of victory: "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and praise, and honor, and power, and strength be to our God// unto the ages of ages. Amen."

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Steadfast Protectress Tone 6 (Hymn to the Theotokos)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians, constant advocate before the Creator. Despise not the entreating cry of us sinners, but in Your Goodness come speedily to help us who call on You in faith! Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos!! For You always protect those who honor You!

READER: Lord have mercy (12x)

O All-Holy Trinity, Consubstantial Power, Undivided Kingdom, Origin of all Good: be graciously inclined unto me, a sinner. Make steadfast my heart and give it understanding, and take away from me every defilement. Enlighten my mind, that I may ever glorify, praise and worship Thee, and say: One is Holy, One is the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore. (3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 34

READER: I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be continually in my mouth. In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my troubles. Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be put to shame. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The Angel of the Lord will encamp around those who fear Him, and will deliver them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopes in Him. O fear the Lord, all you His saints; for there is no want for them that fear Him. The rich have become poor and have hungered; but they that seek the Lord shall lack no good thing. Come, O children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man that desires life, who loves to see days that are good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking deceit.

Turn away from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their supplication. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cried, and the Lord hear them, and He delivered them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are broken in heart, and will save them that are humble in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and out of them all shall the Lord deliver them. The Lord keeps all of their bones; not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is cruel, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. The Lord will redeem the soul of His servants, and none of them shall do wrong that hope in Him.

READER: More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond than the Seraphim, without defilement, You gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos, we magnify You.

CHOIR: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Lord, Bless!

READER: May He, Who rose from the dead, Christ our True God, through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, through the Prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, by the Power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, through the protection of the Bodiless Powers of Heaven, through the prayers of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, through the prayers of the holy glorious and all-laudable Apostles, through the Prayers of all the North American Saints, through the prayers of _____ the patron of this Holy Temple,, through the prayers of The Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia whom we commemorate today, of the holy and righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, have mercy on us and save us.

(The faithful now come up and venerate the Precious Cross and Icons in our Icon Corner.)

READER: **Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.**

CHOIR: Amen. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.



ST. XENIA OF ROME

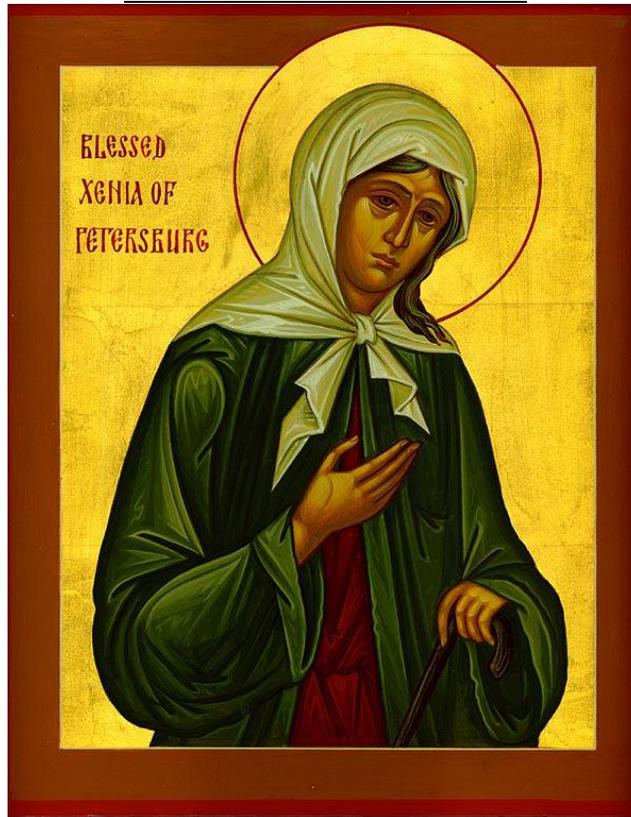
Saint Xenia of Rome, in the world Eusebia, was the only daughter of an eminent Roman senator. From her youth she loved God, and wished to avoid the marriage arranged for her. She secretly left her parental home with two servants devoted to her, and set sail upon a ship. Through the Providence of God she met the head of the monastery of the holy Apostle Andrew in Milassa, a town of Caria (Asia Minor). She besought him to take her and her companions to Milassa. She also changed her name, calling herself Xenia [which means "stranger" or "foreigner" in Greek].

At Milassa she bought land, built a church dedicated to Saint Stephen, and founded a woman's monastery. Soon after this, Bishop Paul of Milassa made Xenia a deaconess, because of her virtuous life. The saint helped everyone: for the destitute, she was a benefactress; for the grief-stricken, a comforter; for sinners, a guide to repentance. She possessed a deep humility, accounting herself the worst and most sinful of all.

In her ascetic deeds she was guided by the counsels of the Palestinian ascetic, Saint Euthymius. The sublime life of Saint Xenia drew many souls to Christ. The holy virgin died in 450 while she was praying. During her funeral, a luminous wreath of stars surrounding a radiant cross appeared over the monastery in the heavens. This sign accompanied the body of the saint when it was carried into the city, and remained until the saint's burial. Many of the sick received healing after touching the relics of the saint. Following the death of Saint Xenia, first one of her former servants died, then the other. They were buried at the saint's feet.

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ST. XENIA OF PETERSBURG



Saint Xenia lived during the eighteenth century, but little is known of her life or of her family. She passed most of her life in Petersburg during the reigns of the empresses Elizabeth and Catherine II. Xenia Grigorievna Petrova was the wife of an army officer, Major Andrew Petrov. After the wedding, the couple lived in Saint Petersburg. Saint Xenia became a widow at the age of twenty-six when her husband suddenly died at a party. She grieved for the loss of her husband, and especially because he died without Confession or Holy Communion. Once her earthly happiness ended, she did not look for it again. From that time forward, Xenia lost interest in the things of this world, and followed the difficult path of foolishness for the sake of Christ. The basis for this strange way of life is to be found in the first Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:18-24, 1 Cor. 2:14, 1 Cor. 3:18-19). The Lord strengthened her and helped her to bear sorrow and misfortune patiently for the next forty-five years. She started wearing her husband's clothing, and insisted that she be addressed as "Andrew Feodorovich." She told people that it was she, and not her husband, who had died. In a certain sense, this was perfectly true. She abandoned her former way of life and experienced a spiritual rebirth. When she gave away her

house and possessions to the poor, her relatives complained to the authorities. After speaking to Xenia, the officials were convinced that she was in her right mind and was entitled to dispose of her property as she saw fit. Soon she had nothing left for herself, so she wandered through the poor section of Petersburg with no place to lay her head. She refused all assistance from her relatives, happy to be free of worldly attachments.

When her late husband's red and green uniform wore out, she clothed herself in rags of those colors. After a while, Xenia left Petersburg for eight years. It is believed that she visited holy Elders and ascetics throughout Russia seeking instruction in the spiritual life. She may have visited Saint Theodore of Sanaxar (February 19), who had been a military man himself. His life changed dramatically when a young officer died at a drinking party. Perhaps this officer was Saint Xenia's husband. In any case, she knew Saint Theodore and profited from his instructions.

Saint Xenia eventually returned to the poor section of Petersburg, where she was mocked and insulted because of her strange behavior. When she did accept money from people it was only small amounts, which she used to help the poor. She spent her nights praying without sleep in a field outside the city. Prayer strengthened her, and in her heart's conversation with the Lord she found the support she needed on her difficult path.

When a new church was being built in the Smolensk cemetery, Saint Xenia brought bricks to the site. She did this in secret, during the night, so that no one would know.

Soon her great virtue and spiritual gifts began to be noticed. She prophesied future events affecting the citizens of Petersburg, and even the royal family. Against her will, she became known as someone pleasing to God, and nearly everyone loved her. They said, "Xenia does not belong to this world, she belongs to God." People regarded her visits to their homes or shops as a great blessing. Saint Xenia loved children, and mothers rejoiced when the childless widow would stand and pray over a baby's crib, or kiss a child. They believed that the blessed one's kiss would bring that child good fortune.

Saint Xenia lived about forty-five years after the death of her husband, and departed to the Lord at the age of seventy-one. The exact date and circumstances of her death are not known, but it probably took place at the end of the eighteenth century. She was buried in the Smolensk cemetery.

By the 1820s, people flocked to her grave to pray for her soul, and to ask her to intercede with God for them. So many visitors took earth from her grave that it had to be replaced every year. Later, a chapel was built over her grave.

Those who turn to Saint Xenia in prayer receive healing from illness, and deliverance from their afflictions. She is also known for helping people who seek jobs.

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**Thirty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
The Blind Man at Jericho
Luke 18:35-43**

**From The Explanation of the Gospel of St. Luke
by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria**

35-43. And it came to pass, that as He was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging. And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should keep silent; but he cried so much the more, Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto Him: and when He was come near, He asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord,

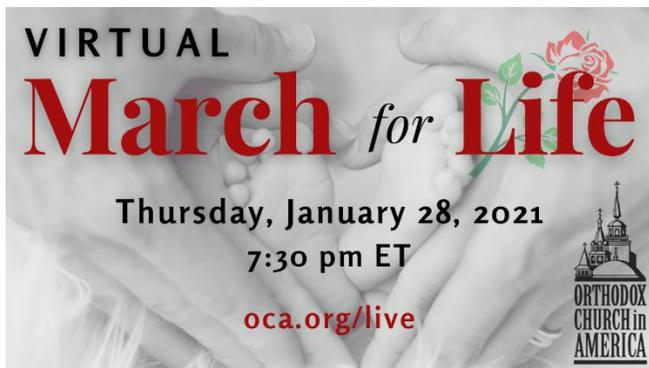
that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

The Lord performed this wayside miracle of the blind man so that even His passage along a road would yield a profitable teaching for His disciples and for us: that we should in all things, at all times, and in every place do what is beneficial and never be idle. The blind man believed that Jesus was the awaited Messiah; having been raised among the Jews, it is certain that he knew that the Christ would be of the seed of David. Therefore he cries out with a great voice, Son of David, have mercy on me. His words have mercy on me show that he understood Jesus to be divine and not merely a man. Marvel at his staunch confession: although rebuked by many, he did not keep silent, but cried out all the more, urged on by the fervent zeal within him. Therefore Jesus summons him as one who is truly worthy to approach Him, and asks him, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? He asks the question, not in ignorance of what the blind man wanted, but so that it would not appear to the others who were present that the Lord gave something different from what the man wanted. Otherwise, some might have said that the Lord, in a vainglorious show of power, healed the mans blindness when the man had only been begging for alms.(1) Envy might well have inspired some to slander the Lord with such foolishness as this. Therefore the Lord asked the blind man what he wanted, and when He heard that he wanted his sight, He gave him his sight. See the absence of vaingloryâ€”the Lord says, "Thy faith hath made thee whole. For you have believed with faith that I am the Son of David, the Christ, Who is now revealed, and you have shown such zeal that you did not keep silent even when rebuked." We may learn from this that when we ask with faith, God does not give something other than what we ask for, but the very same thing. However, when we ask for one thing and receive something else, it is clear that either we did not make a good request or we did not ask with faith. (2) See also the power of the Lord: Receive thy sight.(3) Which of the prophets ever healed in this manner, with such power? His voice, proceeding from Him Who is the true Light, became light to the blind man. See also the gratitude of the healed man: he followed Jesus, glorifying God, and causing others to do the same.

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**THE 2021 SANCTITY OF LIFE SUNDAY
SUNDAY JANUARY 24, 2021**

Sanctity of Life Sunday serves to mark the anniversary of the Roe v Wade decision that legalized abortion in the United States. Orthodox Christians from across the country will proclaim the sanctity of God's precious gift of life and remember the millions of victims abortion has claimed and continues to claim.



The bishops of the Orthodox Church in America have always strongly supported and participated in the annual March for Life held in Washington DC. However, due to the ongoing global health crisis, this year His Beatitude will lead a virtual March for Life event which will be live-streamed on Thursday, January 28 beginning at 7:30 pm ET on oca.org/live and via the OCA's [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) pages. The live-

stream will feature a prayer service led by Metropolitan Tikhon, followed by reflections by His Beatitude. The main address will be given by Dr Ana Iltis of Wake Forest University, a leading Orthodox Christian bioethicist. The broadcast will also highlight Orthodox organizations that support women in crisis pregnancies.

In preparation for Sanctity of Life Sunday, the faithful are encouraged to explore the numerous reflections, articles, texts, liturgical services available online.

**Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon
Sunday, January 24, 2021**



To the Esteemed Clergy, Reverend Monastics, and Beloved Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, Over the past year, Orthodox Christians have become urgently aware of the need to protect the most vulnerable members of our society. In the face of a global pandemic, it became necessary for the world and even our Church to take a series of extraordinary measures in order to safeguard the life and the health of the elderly, the infirm, the defenseless, and the weak. In doing so, we pray that we were given the grace to fulfill the prophetic word, the evangelical command, and the apostolic exhortation not only to show mercy to one another, but also to defend the well-being of all members of the Church and of the world.

In exactly the same spirit, as the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, I take this Sunday – the Sunday that we as a Church dedicate to the proclamation of the Sanctity of Life – as an opportunity to reiterate unequivocally our commitment to the defense of the defenseless, and the protection of the most vulnerable, and thus our opposition to abortion. As Christians it cannot be any other way. Our Lord has taught us throughout the Holy Scriptures to be merciful as He is merciful, to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill His law, to defend the widow and the orphan, to welcome the stranger and the sojourner, and to love one another even as He has loved us. This essential message found throughout Scripture must be all-encompassing and extend to the precious lives carried in the womb. If we are to love even our enemies, as He has commanded us, surely we must also love, defend, and seek to protect precious lives being formed within their mothers' wombs.

Beloved children in the Lord, following the example of our response to the pandemic, we can look to concrete ways in order to fulfill what our Lord has commanded us to do. In other words, the teaching of the Lord should inspire us to seek out ways to provide necessary support for mothers or families who might otherwise consider having an abortion. I, together with the members of the Holy Synod, exhort our clergy and faithful to consider different ways that we might be able to serve and assist pregnant mothers, especially within our own local communities. To this end, we should extend the right hand of fellowship to these mothers and their families, provide material support when needed, and assist them in caring for the children who will be born of them. Above all, I believe, we should affirm to the world – to anyone considering an abortion, to anyone counseling someone to have an abortion, or to anyone who supports this practice – the lessons we have been taught by our Master: the ways of mercy, compassion, and love. In so doing, I pray that we will enkindle in their hearts and minds a change, so that they too will learn to walk in these same ways, and will be moved to protect and defend the most vulnerable among us.

May our Lord Jesus Christ inspire us to remain faithful to the vision of human life as a sacred gift, as we recommit ourselves to defending the lives of the unborn, to offering acts of mercy and kindness to struggling single mothers and families facing hardship, and to praying for the salvation of all of mankind.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
+Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

SANCTITY OF LIFE PETITIONS AND PRAYERS

*These petitions are to be inserted into the Litany of Fervent Supplication
as part of the annual commemoration of Sanctity of Life Sunday.*

Again we pray that Thou will grant to the people of this nation the will to do good, to flee from evil, and to practice all righteousness, making us respectful of life and sharers of Thy blessings, caring for one another in mercy and truth, we pray Thee, O Lord, hear us and have mercy.

Again we pray that Thou will banish all evil from our hearts and wickedness from our laws, enabling us to be servants of Thy holy will and performers of Thy love, we pray Thee, O Lord, hear us and have mercy.

Again we pray that Thou will kindle in our hearts the will to care for the needy, to show kindness to the poor, to aid the homeless and help the helpless, we pray Thee, O Compassionate Lord, hearken quickly, and graciously show mercy.

The following prayer is to be read after the singing of "Blessed be the Name of the Lord" for the third time.

Choir: "Blessed be the Name of the Lord..." (3x)

Priest: The Blessing of The Lord be upon you, always now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord. **Choir:** Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son, Who are in the bosom of the Father, True God, source of life and immortality, Light of Light, Who came into the world to enlighten it: Thou wast pleased to be conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary for the salvation of our souls by the power of Thy All-Holy Spirit. O Master, Who came that we might have life more abundantly, we ask Thee to enlighten the minds and hearts of those blinded to the truth that life begins at conception and that the unborn in the womb are already adorned with Thine image and likeness; enable us to guard, cherish, and protect the lives of all those who are unable to care for themselves. For Thou art the Giver of Life, bringing each person from non-being into being, sealing each person with divine and infinite love. Be merciful, O Lord, to those who, through ignorance or willfulness, affront Thy divine goodness and providence through the evil act of abortion. May they, and all of us, come to the life of Your Truth and glorify Thee, the Giver of Life, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting and Thine All-Holy Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen. *Followed by the usual dismissal.*

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Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God. A primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith. Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. As Stewards, we affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from Him. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been blessed. **Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges** accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God by teaching and giving examples of a virtuous life to all (St. John Chrysostom). A primary goal of Stewardship is to strengthen our understanding of the teachings and dogmas of The Orthodox Faith through supporting the work of The Church. This can be found in The Divine Services as reiterated by St. John of San Francisco: "The Divine Services in their composition contain all the fullness of the dogmatic teaching of the Church and set forth the path of salvation." Fulfilling our responsibility of continual learning begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. Through being Stewards of the Gospel and of The Orthodox Church, Education calls on the faithful to cheerfully receive instruction given to the Church by Our Lord, Holy Scripture, The Divine Services, and The Holy Fathers of the Church. Through Orthodox Christian Stewardship, The Church promotes spiritual growth and strengthened faith and calls on all of us to bring the faith and love of Our Lord to every aspect of our lives as gifts from Him through our time, talents, and treasures. During this year, let us come together as a Diocesan Family and recommit ourselves to both spiritual growth of our Life in Christ as well as through Orthodox Christian Stewardship by attending the Divine Services, attending the many opportunities of Education for both Adults and Children through Parish Education, gatherings, and fellowship and by supporting our Parishes and Diocese in the many endeavors through which, by the Grace of God, we will bring the light and love of Our Lord to all!

LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE. 1 Cor.16:14

*YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL,
AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. Matt. 22:37*

YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. Matt. 22:39

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU. Matt. 5:44

*LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND, LOVE DOES NOT ENVY, LOVE DOES NOT BOAST, LOVE IS NOT
PROUD, LOVE IS NOT SELFISH, LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED. 1Cor. 13:4*

*LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS, LOVE ALWAYS HAS FAITH, LOVE ALWAYS HAS HOPE, LOVE
ENDURES ALL THINGS. LOVE NEVER FAILS! 1Cor. 13:7,8*