

This does not mean that we must be reading and talking about God always; we can be involved in our daily affairs without losing sense of the presence of God. We do similar things in other areas of our life. Let's say that your father happens to be sleeping in one of the rooms of the house, and you must be careful not to wake him up. You will find yourself whispering to your siblings or visiting friends so you will not interrupt your father's sleep. You don't need to remind each other at every second that your father is sleeping, you simply have the sense in the back of your mind that your father is home sleeping. Now we'll use another example: let's say that you are sleeping on the top bunk bed at camp. Assuming that you twist and turn in your regular bed, you don't do this while you are sleeping on the top bunk bed. Something inside you is awake. Even though your body is asleep, deep in your subconscious there is this sense, that extra sense that is telling you, don't twist or don't turn, you are sleeping on a high place and you cannot move freely. It is this sense that will keep you from falling.

Similarly, the remembrance of God is not something that I must consciously maintain at all times, and keep reminding myself. It is a feeling, a sense that penetrates my inner being. However, for me to acquire this sense, I must exercise and continue to do so for a long time. My friend, if you happen to be a young person of the Sunday school level, this is your opportune time to attempt to acquire this sense, which will keep God constantly in your memory. This is extremely important: the sense that is God is constantly next to you, watching you, protecting you, following you, ready to assist you. This remembrance of God becomes a shield, a protection and a fortress for the practicing Christian. It will protect us from harm, idolatry and sin. Again, when Joseph was tempted, and seduced in a very provocative manner, he called out for this very presence of God. He said, "How can I do this evil deed in the presence of my God and sin against him?" Joseph was saved from a grave sin by keeping the remembrance of God in his daily life.

On the contrary, the forgetfulness of God is a very serious sin and the child of one of the seven deadly passions called sloth, or spiritual laziness. Sloth has two children: forgetfulness and ignorance. Forgetfulness of God can be the cause of much, much wrongdoing, while the constant remembrance of God serves as the spiritual compass for those who wish to travel towards paradise. It increases our piety, our fear and love of God and our overall Orthodox spirituality.

If we envelop ourselves with the memory of God, we will learn to appreciate creation and rejoice daily. When we gaze at a lovely flower, we will immediately be moved to ascribe glory to God: "What a beautiful lily God created!" What a beautiful day, a crystal blue sky, the breathtaking beauty of the freshly fallen snowflakes on trees, all these we will quickly attribute to the wisdom of God, glorifying him.

Furthermore, the remembrance of God develops inside of us the desire to see the face of God, which transfers our desires from earthly things to the heavenly. We don't become attached to earthly things, like the materialist man. Material-

ism is a poor and lifeless substitute stemming from the lack of communion with God, a disease that characterizes the vast majority of today's civilizations and cultures. But the person whose heart is full of the remembrance of God transcends the needs for trinkets and earthly pleasures; his body is on earth but his mind is more concerned about regaining lost paradise. He does not become easily entrapped by all the modern sirens and wonders of technology.

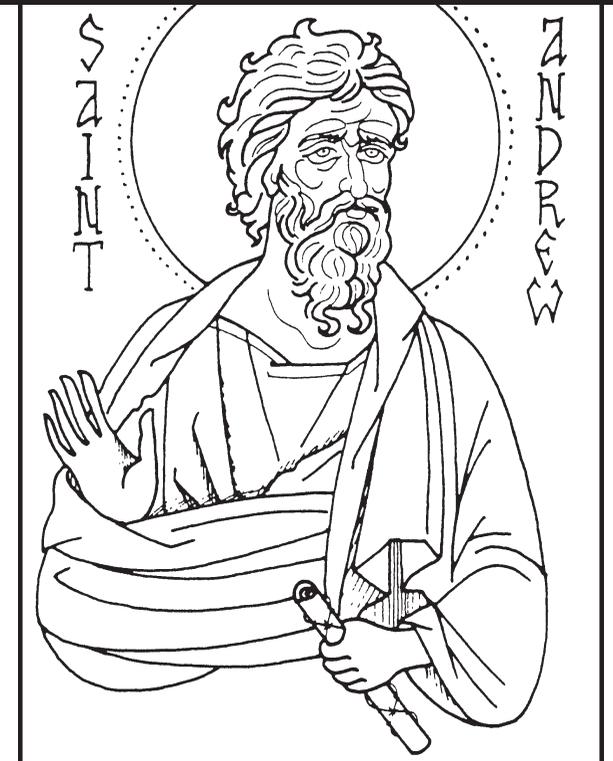
More importantly, especially in our days, the remembrance of God will serve as the antidote to today's epidemic of loneliness, alienation and feelings of abandonment. The denial of God is responsible for today's widespread psychological-emotional illnesses. I assure you from my own experience that if I didn't have this remembrance of God, if I didn't know God, I would look at my life without any content or purpose. The meaning of the purpose of my life I receive from this remembrance of God. St. Paul says we have no permanent country here, no permanent city (cf. Heb. 13:14). If we don't believe in the Kingdom of God, then what is there to hope for? Without this blessed hope (Tit. 2:13), much like St. Paul I would ask myself, what is life all about anyway? Why do we exist? What am I doing? Are we all dust in the wind, as the song says? This loneliness and isolation can be a great plague, and it stems from the morbid philosophies of existentialism and nihilism, which likens the life of man to the life of a rain droplet that falls in the vast ocean of eternity and vanishes forever. This is undoubtedly one of the main causes of depression, hopelessness, substance abuse, suicidal attempts, and many other evils. The cultivation of the remembrance of God develops in us the sense of being connected with the loving care of our almighty Heavenly Father, the cause of all hope, joy and blessedness.

... Finally, the remembrance of God fills us with true spiritual joy, a joy not of this world. The prophet David writes, *I remembered God and I became joyful* (Psalm 76:3). St. Paul includes joy as one of the higher fruits of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:22. This joy is a gift of God to His prayerful children and has nothing to do with the temporary fix of a new car, or a new watch, or a new office, or a new diploma. This is the joy of the Holy Spirit that accompanies those who remember God unceasingly and include Him in every aspect of their lives. Let us pray that all of us, young and old, can become filled by the joy stemming from the remembrance of God. And all those who remember God are also remembered by God, Who says about some people, *I will remember them no more* (Ps.33:16), meaning that God does not recognize those that went through life without the remembrance of God. It is the very thing that many Christians may hear from Christ at the end of time: *Go away from me evildoers, I don't know you* (Luke 13:27.) How dreadful that time will be for those of us who did not yet start to repent! The angel told Cornelius in the Acts of the Apostles, *Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.* (Acts 10:31). Cornelius remembered God daily in his prayers and so God remembered him as well. He sent the apostle Peter to baptize him and his household and made them members of His Church.

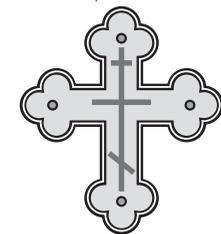
<http://orthochristian.com/103694.html>

# SS. Constantine and Elena Orthodox Church

November 26, 2017



**ST. ANDREW**  
**THE FIRST-CALLED APOSTLE**  
**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30**



Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, OCA  
3237 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46222  
317.638.4162 • [saintsconstantineandelena.org](http://saintsconstantineandelena.org)

The Reverend Father David T. Wey, *Parish Priest*  
317.484.1288 (home) • 317.627.2282 (cell)  
Rev. Dn. Paul McDonald, *attached* 317.696.0079 (cell)

## PARISH LIFE

**NOVEMBER 15 – DECEMBER 24: NATIVITY FAST**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017: 30<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
(TONE 8, MATINS GOSPEL 3)**

8:40 am Matins

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29**

6:30 pm Vigil for St. Andrew (no book study)

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30: ST. ANDREW THE FIRST-CALLED**

8:00 am Divine Liturgy

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 2**

5:00 pm Mystery of Confession (by appointment, please)

6:00 pm Great Vespers (followed by confessions)

**PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND OF OUR PARISH:**

Victor Cosgarea, Jay Hanko, Jan Isham, Zachary Waltz, Margaret Wey and Brett Zimmerman.

**LOOKING AHEAD...**

*Next Sunday's readings (31st Sunday after Pentecost): 1 Timothy 1:15-17; Luke 18:35-43.*

**Sunday, December 3**

12:00 pm Annual Youth Dinner (in place of coffee hour)

**The Feasts of December:**

**Tuesday, December 5**

6:30 pm Vigil for St. Nicholas

**Wednesday, December 6**

8:00 am Divine Liturgy for St. Nicholas

**Tuesday, December 12**

6:30 pm Vigil for St. Herman of Alaska

**Wednesday, December 13**

8:00 am Divine Liturgy for St. Herman

**Tuesday, December 19**

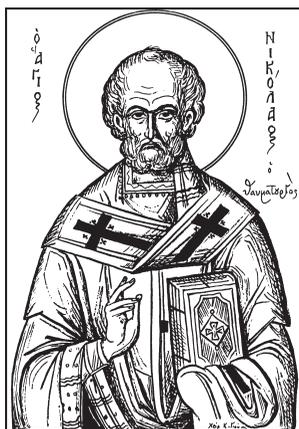
6:30 pm Vigil for St. Ignatius of Antioch

**Wednesday, December 20**

8:00 am Divine Liturgy for St. Ignatius

**YOUTH DINNER, DECEMBER 3**

The annual youth group dinner will take the place of coffee hour next Sunday, December 3 (closest Sunday to St. Nicholas). This is the youth's major fund raiser for the coming year's activities of fellowship and service together. All are encouraged to attend, and plan to give generously to support our younger brothers and sisters in the Faith.



## NOVEMBER IS PLEDGE MONTH

The time of year has arrived again, when your parish asks you to consider what and how much to give in the coming year. Pledge cards are available in the narthex or at the book corner. As we approach the realization of the expansion of our facilities ahead of us, it is more crucial than ever for the faithful to support the work of the Church. Please consider how much, and in what ways, you can give of your treasure, time and talent in 2018. May God inspire us to generosity and receive our humble offerings.

### SPEAKING OF PLEDGES ...

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** In order to qualify as a voting member of the parish at the annual General Assembly in January, our Episcopate By-Laws require that baptized Orthodox Christians, eighteen years old or older, who have faithfully attended the parish (from at least the last six months of the year), must partake of the Mysteries of Confession and Holy Communion at least once in the previous year, and have met their financial obligation to the parish (in our case, fulfilled their pledge) by December 31. This upcoming General Assembly will be of specific significance, as we move forward with building plans. All pledging members are encouraged to be ready to take part.

### SAINT JOHN'S CAMP WINTER RETREAT 2017

This year's Winter Retreat will be held Thursday, December 28th to Sunday, December 31st at Highland Lakes Camp near Monrovia, IN. Winter Retreat is for high schoolers and young adults. There will be fellowship, prayer, teachings, singing, games, and great merriment - don't miss it for the World! INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!! Standard registration (\$215) ends 12/17 - don't wait! It is OKAY if you cannot pay the full registration fee up front as long as full payment is received two weeks before camp. If you are in need of financial assistance please speak to your parish priest. Scholarships may also be available through St. John's Camp Programs' Scholarship Fund. Questions? Contact the camp directors, Brian Deubner or Jon Beecham, at [director@saintjohnscamp.org](mailto:director@saintjohnscamp.org).

Please go to [www.saintjohnscamp.org/events/wr2017](http://www.saintjohnscamp.org/events/wr2017) for more details and to register!

### A FEW NOTES ON THE FAST

The Nativity Fast of forty days is intended to help us long for and prepare to celebrate the great Feast of our Lord's Birth - his Incarnation for us and for our salvation. In terms of the prescribed food, it is a bit lighter in character than the Great Fast before Pascha: Wine and oil are allowed on all days but Monday, Wednesday and Friday; fish is also allowed on Saturdays and Sundays, and also on the feasts of the Entrance (November 21), of St. Andrew (November 30), and St. Nicholas (December 6).

Let us remember that fasting in the Church is not an individual labor (to see how "well" we do or don't do as individuals); it is an "ecclesial" work of

asceticism, something that the whole Body of Christ does together, and each of us enters into that corporate experience to the best of our ability. Let us encourage each other to "set our minds on things above" as we orient our lives to the "Dayspring from on high" who comes to us as a little Child.

### NO BOOK STUDY THIS WEEK

We break from our usual study of "The Heavenly Banquet" this Wednesday to keep vigil for St. Andrew, the First-Called Apostle. We will resume the study on December 6.

### OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTS OF MERCY: READY TO EAT EMERGENCY PACKS

Occasionally the needy of the area stop in and request food, which Father David and Deacon Paul attempt to accommodate if food is available. You can help! Please consider donating emergency food packs for this purpose. Such packs must:

- include only non-perishable items;
- be packaged in a plastic or paper grocery bag;
- contain a protein source such as canned\* meat, beans, soup, jar of peanut butter (with crackers or bread), nuts, protein bar;
- contain a fruit or vegetable such as fruit cups, applesauce cups, canned\* vegetables;
- contain a dessert such as a pudding cup, fruit or cereal bar, packaged cookies;
- contain a drink such as bottled water or juice box; and
- contain a napkin and any necessary plastic utensils.

\*Canned items need to have a pull-top (no can opener required).

This is a great way to offer "acts of mercy" during the Nativity Fast. Please place your donations in the designated box in the basement.

### ON THE UNCEASING REMEMBRANCE OF GOD

Archimandrite Athanasios Mitilinaios

The remembrance of God is that precious virtue that kept Joseph from sinning while all alone and very young in Egypt, a country known for its immorality and idolatry. What is this memory of God? It is the very thing of which Saint Gregory the Theologian said: It is more important to remember God than to breathe. Since we breathe unceasingly, our remembrance of God must also be unceasing. One can ask, how is this possible? In the real world we have to work, we have to go to school, we have to study, we have to concentrate on so many different tasks on a daily basis; we have to talk, listen, drive, and give our undivided attention to our family members, among other things. This remembrance of God must be planted very deep in the innermost depths of our very existence. The remembrance of God must be in our blood so to speak; in our subconscious.

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