

**The Orthodox Parish  
of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,  
Lancaster, U.K.**

***The Stavronian***

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*Ἦθρονος Χριστός Ζωοδότης.  
(Φ. Κόντογλου, 1962).*

*The Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,  
belongs to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland.  
The Patriarchate of Antioch is third senior of the Orthodox Churches.  
The Patriarch is His Beatitude John X.*

***The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch  
(Acts 11:26)***

## ENTHRONEMENT OF OUR NEW BISHOP SILOUAN; MANY YEARS!



*The Enthronement of Bishop Silouan and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the Antiochian Cathedral in London on Feb. 28*

### THE MODEL OF PRAYER

Luke 11:1-4; *Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” So He said to them, “When you pray, say:*

*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 the evil one.”*

#### Context and Background

The Lord’s Prayer is given by Our Lord Jesus Christ in response to a demand by

one of his disciples “*teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*”

The Prayer is recorded in two of the Gospels. Two forms are found; a longer form in the Gospel of Matthew 6:5-13 as part of the Sermon on the Mount and a shorter form in Luke 11:1-4. In St. Matthew’s Gospel, the Lord’s Prayer is set within Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount and specifically his teaching on prayer which begins with a rebuttal of those play actors or hypocrites who pretend at piety. We are warned against vain repetition and lengthy rhetoric-true prayer is the prayer of the heart and that is why we should pray without ceasing (Luke 18; 1). Repetition when done in Spirit and in Truth is life enhancing and spiritually effective. True prayer involves us going into the secret chamber of our heart v.6 (go into your room Jesus says) we are to close the door, shut out all distractions and temptations and pray to the Father. So before we express our prayer with our lips we need to have prepared the soil of our heart so that the words of Christ watered by the Holy Spirit can bloom in our mouth and give voice to the glory of God our Father. How seldom we make this preparation, but it is vital if we are going to take our communion with God and make spiritual progress - the stillness of the heart is the receiver and transmitter of all human longings and expressions.

A Rabbinic prayer, that which is taught in order to be recited, was seen both as efficacious for communion with God and a means of identification-cementing the bond between the Teacher, the pupil and God.

“Teach us!” is a request, which recognises Divine authority and personal needs within the community. In the often fractured and dissembled society in which we live - this honest and enthusiastic child like simplicity comes as a breath of fresh air. Furthermore, it

acknowledges that prayer is a gift that has structure and a living tradition that can be passed on from one generation to another. The longevity of the Lord's Prayer is testimony to that truth.

We see in the Acts of the Apostles and continue to witness within the Orthodox Church the three elements of worship; Apostolic doctrine, Liturgical prayers and the Eucharist. The prayers were specifically set prayers in line with Judaic practice and not extempore or spontaneous. Acts 2:42; *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in (the) prayers.*

Such set or formal prayers are common in the East where Choirs, Readers and Psaltes often learn the eight tones and Kontakia off by heart, often without being able to read music. It is difficult to imagine in this age of instant information and social media just how important the learning and reciting of prayers was, even a few decades ago. The meaning of Prayer is discerned though "Theoria"; the application for spiritual growth through "Praxis."

Christ gives to His disciples a model of prayer in which they could Adore God, Confess their sins, give Thanks to God and Supplicate for their needs. These ACTS constitute the work of the Church.

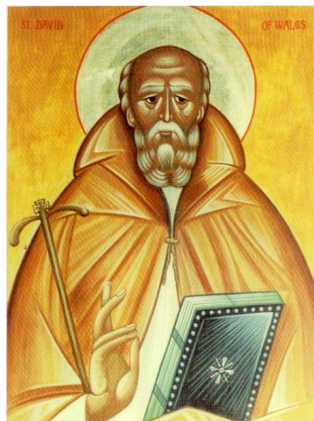
However, one may see the Lord's Prayer in the greater Acts of God's Salvation as outlined in the Creed, the Symbol of Faith and the context of Christ's coming, who as the Second Adam, has entered into history to renew and to restore the relationship of God with man and man with God. The Lord's Prayer is the seal and evidence of this action. *"The Lord enters into a second communion much more amazing than the first"* --- St Gregory the Theologian (Homily 45:8)

This wish for dependency by the disciples marks a recommencement of the

dialogue between earth and heaven after Adam's excommunication from Eden because of his wish for independence. We often note throughout the Gospels, how often the disciples get things wrong. They misunderstand and misjudge Our Lord's words, they are perplexed by His parables, they vie for position amongst themselves, they speak when not appropriate; yet here, with their request, they get it right: *"Teach us how to pray!"*

At our Community of the Holy Cross in Lancaster, we hear the Lord's Prayer recited in different languages during the Divine Liturgy: in English, Greek, Slavonic, Romanian, Arabic, German and Mandarin reflecting the eclectic calling of the ekklesia! It is a microcosm of the universality of our Holy Faith and a little Pentecost where our corporate affirmation is an audible witness that we all belong to One Father.

The Lord's Prayer takes us to the living past and to the heralded future whilst uniting us with one another and God in the sanctified present.



Psalm 46:2; *"All nations clap your hands dance in gladness."* The clapping of hands is an appreciation of what God has done in Jesus Christ. The symphony of voices spans heaven and earth; the

prophets, martyrs, confessors, angels, apostles, fathers and all the righteous spirits join together. As the Triodion of Great Saturday Ode 3 of the Canon proclaims: *“What was separated is united.”*

The whole Church on earth dwells in each believer, so whether we recite the Lord’s Prayer at home in our Icon Corner or with others at Church in the Holy Liturgy, we stand next to Christ in the Holy Spirit before the Father. Prayer is the voice of the Church and infuses all the senses with the love of God. Hebrews 10:20; *“Let us look to each other encouraging one another to love.”*

Prayer is Life lived in the love of God. On a recent visit to Romania a priest friend, Fr. Bogdan Georgescu and I were driving to a Monastery. As we drove along the straight roads, either side of us were fields upon fields of sun flowers. All of the heads of the Sun Flowers were directed towards the Sun. The heads of the Sun flowers’ in built natural radar were focussed upon the light and tracking the Sun! For Sun Flowers Light is Life! For us too prayer is tracking and following the Light of the World. For us, Christ is Life. Christians may be from the earth, but they are invested with the Holy Spirit and their heads face towards the heavens: Hebrews 12:2; *Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Looking unto Jesus is therefore the soul’s disposition towards God it is the inclination of the heart, it is a standing in the Lord’s presence. The movement of the Holy Spirit directs our words upwards towards the throne of God in heaven. Like a stone thrown into a pool our words ripple from the centre of our being; they expand upon the waters, they reach outwards incrementally in an ever enlarging, encompassing wave of love. St

Isaac the Syrian said: *Perfect prayer guides man to heaven. It disdains the love of this world. By prayer we draw to us that grace which is termed “the Kingdom of Heaven,” and once we feel it exists, we forget earth and all that belongs therein. All we remember is our invisible, powerful helper.”*

Pride, arrogance and hypocrisy on the other hand has the opposite effect, it separates us from the Light of Christ; it diminishes our humanity. *“A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.”* — C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*



We should note that Our Lord says: *“When you pray, say...”* Indeed, we say the Lord’s Prayer - it is not a silent meditation. We say the Prayer out loud, but though we say the Prayer we must also pray the prayer. This may seem tautologous but in fact it is easy to recite the Lord’s Prayer without taking cognizance of its content. It is so established that people recite it off by rote rather like a child reciting the mathematical times tables. Our saying the prayer is not simply the movement of

the lips alone, it is the cogitations of the mind and the stirrings of the heart strengthened by the will. It demands all of our being, all our effort and concentration, to truly say and then live out the Lord's Prayer.

Although it is so well known, so familiar, there is a danger that we slip into automatic pilot when reciting the Lord's Prayer, rather than having the Holy Spirit as our Pilot. To exercise our humanity in its fullness, the prayer must become part of us, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who is amongst us. The testimony of faith is transmitted amongst the gathered community like the man with the megaphone at a rally or demonstration who voices the thoughts and ideas of those around him. This petition so often heard in the Holy Liturgy expresses that same corporate conviction: *Let us pray to the Lord, Lord have mercy (on us)*

*“Teach us”*... The ancients knew the value of education and the importance of a teacher. The need to acquire the knowledge of God is amply illustrated in the Old Covenant with the form of collected writings and sayings known as "wisdom literature." The books of Psalms and Proverbs are full of spiritual sagacity, practical advice, guidance and discernment for those who want to live the righteous life, but a life lived within the community of faith - amongst others - you and me - **us**, together. Yet writing was accompanied by an auditory memory of oral tradition - that learned, remembered and recited.

... To be continued

*Fr Jonathan*



## 55 MAXIMS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

Fr. Thomas Hopko was once asked to come up with a simple and concise list that would capture the essence of our Life in Christ as we struggle on the path towards salvation. He came up with the following 55 maxims, which are useful to all.

1. Be always with Christ and trust God in everything.
2. Pray as you can, not as you think you must.
3. Have a keepable rule of prayer done by discipline.
4. Say the Lord's Prayer several times each day.
5. Repeat a short prayer when your mind is not occupied.
6. Make some prostrations when you pray.
7. Eat good foods in moderation and fast on fasting days.
8. Practice silence, inner and outer.
9. Sit in silence 20 to 30 minutes each day.
10. Do acts of mercy in secret.
11. Go to liturgical services regularly.
12. Go to confession and holy communion regularly.
13. Do not engage intrusive thoughts and feelings.
14. Reveal all your thoughts and feelings to a trusted person regularly.
15. Read the scriptures regularly.
16. Read good books, a little at a time.
17. Cultivate communion with the saints.
18. Be an ordinary person, one of the human race.

19. Be polite with everyone, first of all family members.
20. Maintain cleanliness and order in your home.
21. Have a healthy, wholesome hobby.
22. Exercise regularly.
23. Live a day, even a part of a day, at a time.
24. Be totally honest, first of all with yourself.
25. Be faithful in little things.
26. Do your work, then forget it.
27. Do the most difficult and painful things first.
28. Face reality.
29. Be grateful.
30. Be cheerful.
31. Be simple, hidden, quiet and small.
32. Never bring attention to yourself.
33. Listen when people talk to you.
34. Be awake and attentive, fully present where you are.
35. Think and talk about things no more than necessary.
36. Speak simply, clearly, firmly, directly.
37. Flee imagination, fantasy, analysis, figuring things out.
38. Flee carnal, sexual things at their first appearance.
39. Don't complain, grumble, murmur or whine.
40. Don't seek or expect pity or praise.
41. Don't compare yourself with anyone.
42. Don't judge anyone for anything.
43. Don't try to convince anyone of anything.
44. Don't defend or justify yourself.
45. Be defined and bound by God, not people.
46. Accept criticism gracefully and test it carefully.
47. Give advice only when asked or when it is your duty.
48. Do nothing for people that they can and should do for themselves.
49. Have a daily schedule of activities, avoiding whim and caprice.
50. Be merciful with yourself and others.
51. Have no expectations except to be fiercely tempted to your last breath.
52. Focus exclusively on God and light, and never on darkness, temptation and sin.
53. Endure the trial of yourself and your faults serenely, under God's mercy.
54. When you fall, get up immediately and start over.
55. Get help when you need it, without fear or shame.

## **NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH**

Mar. 12: *Georgianna*

Mar. 18: *Fr. Thomas Hopko*

Mar. 19: *Metropolitan Philip of North America and Fr. Georgios Myrou*

### **MEMORY ETERNAL!**

Please send us the names of your departed loved ones and date of their departure in order for them to be remembered.



## PARISH NEWS

On Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, the Parish celebrated our first Divine Liturgy at St Martin's church, Westgate! A photo of the exterior and a few of the interior of the church during the liturgy follow.



*The Parish after the end of the Divine Liturgy*

After the Divine Liturgy, Fr Jonathan, Aidan, Dmitry, Ioannis and Anastasios visited the hermits cell at St Patrick's Chapel and Monastery at Heysham. A photo taken on the site follows.



*The iconostasis just before the start of the Liturgy*



*Ioannis, Aidan, Dmitry and Anastasios at hermits cell, St Patrick's chapel.*



*The faithful during the sermon*

The Parish received beautiful *Sticharions* as gift, to be worn by our servers during the Divine Liturgy! They were provided by Fr Igor from Moscow, Russia! Anastasios Apostolidis donated for our new church various holy gifts brought by his family from Drama, Greece. In addition, Oleg Kolosov, provided a table with extending legs to be used as a *Proskomede* table. We are so ever grateful for these kind gifts and pray that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ gives the reward!

After one year (Dec. 2014) that Oleg Lychkovskiy, Konstantinos Kalemis and Antonios Papakonstantinou constructed a

new base for our iconostasis, Tony and Ioanna Plater with the help of Aidan Wearing and Fr Jonathan extended it to include the North and South Angels' Doors. They stayed until 11.30 p.m. on Sat. 13<sup>th</sup> of February constructing the new frame! We wholeheartedly thank Tony, Ioanna and Aidan for the hard work they've put on this holy task!



*Fr Jonathan and Aidan posing in front of our extended iconostasis. Aidan one of our new Sticharions provided by Fr Igor and Yuri Ismagilov*



*Anastasios Apostolidis' mother Christina and brother Dimitrios from Drama, Greece, visited Lancaster. Here at Fr Jonathan's iconcorner.*

## STAVRONIAN CORNER

Tatiani Rapatzikou and her mother Vasiliki from Thessaloniki, Greece, have sent candles, charcoal, incense and oil wicks for our new Church! May God give His blessing for their kindness!

~+~

Dear Farther Jonathan,

Please, accept our greetings and congratulations about the moving of the Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross to the Church of St Martin of Tours in Morecambe.

We are wishing that the Parish grows and more people come to the new place, and may a Sunday school be established there, and all together do baking sale, community diners (excellent fund-raising for Church) and other significant events.

Best wishes to Lancaster Orthodox community,

*Alla, Andrei and Masha*

## MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1<sup>st</sup> Mar: St. David of Wales (†589)

2<sup>nd</sup> Mar: Our Holy fathers St Nicholas Planas & St Joachim of Ithaca and Vatopaedi

7<sup>th</sup> Mar: Clean Monday; Lent starts today

13<sup>th</sup> Mar: Sunday of Orthodoxy

17<sup>th</sup> Mar: St Patrick, the Enlightener of Ireland (†492)

20<sup>th</sup> Mar: St Cuthbert the Wonderworker, Bishop of Lindisfarne (†687)

25<sup>th</sup> Mar: The Annunciation of our Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

30<sup>th</sup> Mar: St John Climacus the righteous, author of the Divine Ladder of Ascent



**31<sup>st</sup> Mar: St. Innocent, Enlightener of  
Siberia & Alaska**

For the lives of Saints please visit the  
Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdi-  
ocese of America: [www.calendar.goarch.org](http://www.calendar.goarch.org)

### Services at St Martin's during March\*

Sat. 5 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Holy Liturgy followed by Memorial service
Sun. 6 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Holy Liturgy
Sat. 12 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 pm	Vespers
Sun. 13 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Holy Liturgy
Fri. 18 <sup>th</sup>	6:30 pm	First Salutations to the Holy Theotokos (Χαιρετισμοί)
Sat. 19 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 pm	Vespers
Sun. 20 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Holy Liturgy – Sunday of Orthodoxy
Fri. 25 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Holy Liturgy – The Annunciation of the Holy Theotokos
	6:30 pm	Second Salutations to the Holy Theotokos (Χαιρετισμοί)
Sat. 26 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 pm	Vespers
Sun. 27 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Holy Liturgy followed by Parish lunch

\*Help setting up the church is greatly appreciated and starts from 9.15 a.m.

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“God cares for everyone. Despair is in effect a lack of faith”  
- St. George Karslides -



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The following blogs of Old Stavronians are available in Romanian, [Constiinta Ortodoxa](#), in  
English, [Orthodox city hermit](#), and in Greek, [Orthodoxy rainbow](#).

