

St. Michael Orthodox Church

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Saturday, November 11-----Vigil & Confessions, 5 p.m.

Sunday, November 12-----Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. *Parish Council.*

Wednesday, November 15-----***Beginning of the Nativity Fast (Advent)***

Saturday, November 18-----Vigil & Confessions, 5 p.m.

Sunday, November 19-----Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. **Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple.**

Saturday, November 25-----Vigil & Confession, 5 p.m.

Sunday, November 26-----Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. Thanksgiving molieben & akathist.

Saturday, December 2-----Vigil & Confession, 5 p.m.

Sunday, December 3-----Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Saturday, December 9-----Vigil & Confession, 5 p.m.

Sunday, December 10-----Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. *Parish Council.*

Saturday, December 16-----Church Cleaning, 10 a.m. Vigil & Confession, 5 p.m.

Sunday, December 17-----Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. **Sunday of the Forefathers.**

Saturday, December 23-----Vigil, 5 p.m.

Sunday, December 24-----Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. **Eve of the Nativity of Christ.**



Parish Life

	<u>Reader</u>		<u>Coffee Hour</u>	<u>Cleaning</u>
	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Epistle</u>		
11-12	Perry	Perry	Regan	Regan
11-19	Soot	Soot	Salazar/Kakulia	Scioscia
11-26	Perry	Tolkach	Chkheidze/Hix	Andruss
12-03	===Athanasius===		[Bagels]	Bliss
12-10	Crawford	Blank	Crawford	Crawford
12-17	Scioscia	Bliss	Bodenhause	Dawson
12-24	Crawford	Crawford	Tolkach/ Bliss	Elchinoff



The fallen human mind is fragmented, prone unceasingly to distractions, and scattered across a troubled infinity of disconnected thoughts and sensations. Our minds are always elsewhere than our bodies. Rather than working to alleviate this constitutive weakness, we have built a culture of organized distractions, aiding and abetting the mind in its fallen condition. It can be argued that the computer itself is a fallen mind, a powerful extension of our own dubious desires, created after our own image. Linger unregenerately in a realm of illusions; mesmerized by the images flitting about on our computer screens, we become "dull, predatory flies buzzing on the chamber window," desperate to consume all the futility of the world.

Yet, we are not the predators, but the prey. We are not the users of information technologies and social media, but rather are being used, manipulated, and exploited by them. In our culture of distractions, public and private spaces are saturated with technologies designed to arrest and appropriate our attention; our interior mental lives, like our bodies, are merely resources to be harvested by powerful economic interests. (Matthew Crawford suggests that distractibility is to the mind what obesity is to the body.) Our focus, then, should not be on technology and digital culture alone, but on the interests and motivations that guide their design and promote their dissemination into every aspect of our life.

Throughout its long history, Christianity has often been subservient to the prevailing political and economic structures, forgetting that the Gospel is not derivative of human culture, but generative of a new way of life. We need to recover the power of the Gospel as a countercultural force, not with the aim of destabilizing society, but in order to create life-affirming communities. We need to rediscover, not simply that our faith and vocation to holiness set us apart from the world, but that they also engender a new, alternative world; not a virtual reality, but the reality of virtue.

— *Fr. Maximos Constas, Holy Cross School of Theology, Boston, MA: Lecture in Athens, May 2015.*



Thank You, O Lord!

Everyone capable of thanksgiving is capable of salvation and eternal joy.

— Thank You, O Lord, for having accepted this Eucharist, which we offered to the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and which filled our hearts with the joy, peace and righteousness of the Holy Spirit.

— Thank You, O Lord, for having revealed Yourself to us and given us the foretaste of Your Kingdom.

— Thank You, O Lord, for having united us to one another in serving You and Your Holy Church.

— Thank You, O Lord, for having helped us to overcome all difficulties, tensions, passions, temptations and restored peace, mutual love and joy in sharing the communion of the Holy Spirit.

— Thank You, O Lord, for the sufferings You bestowed upon us, for they are purifying us from selfishness and reminding us of the "one thing needed;" Your eternal Kingdom.

— Thank You, O Lord, for having given us this country where we are free to Worship You.

— Thank You, O Lord, for this school, where the name of God is proclaimed.

— Thank You, O Lord, for our families: husbands, wives and, especially, children who teach us how to celebrate Your holy Name in joy, movement and holy noise.

— Thank You, O Lord, for everyone and everything.

Great are You, O Lord, and marvelous are Your deeds, and no word is sufficient to celebrate Your miracles.

Lord, it is good to be here! Amen.

(The last sermon of Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, given on Thanksgiving Day, a few weeks before his death in 1983.)