

## **Parish Prayer List (Living)**

*(Parish)*

Evangelos	Carolyn	Robert	Subdcn Jason
John B.	Maria	Anamay	Ron
Anthony	Paula	Kathleen	SJ
Beverly	David	Michael	Anastasia
Thomas	Gloria	Thecla	Michael
Reader John	Kimberly	Matthew	Levi
Sbdcn Maximus	Emilia	Photini	George S.
Magdalini	Constanka	Emil	George D.
Rita	John D.	Pam	Grace
Priscilla		Hesychios	Elizabeth
Sophia	Danny	Reader Mark	Evdokia
Nicholas	Mary	Rachel	Katherine
Lily	Theodora	Elizabeth	Joseph
Justine	David	Sabrina	Kay
Christopher	Crystal	Rosa-Jane	Ian
Gabriel	Marcia	John R.	Johannah

*(non-Parish)*

Alexandra	Rachael	Thomas Pappas	David
Christopher	Fr. Michael	Paige and Paul	Jennifer
Gabriella	Josiah	Jacob	Catherine
Hugh	Raymond	Judy	Mike
Ron	Clint	Peter	Maria
Brian	George K.	Sean	Sara
Ruth	Janet H.	Pam	Ana
Roz	Krista	Marty	Margo
Joseph	Kera	Vanessa	Emma
Jane	Scott	Torin	Breanne
Randy	Fr. Michael	Randy	Kay

## **Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)**

Mary Louise Blomeley (+12/10)

Betty Pilja (+12/6)

Josephine Urban (+12/15)

Dominick LoGalbo (+12/25)

## **Thoughts from the Fathers**

“With the God-man Christ, all that is God’s has become man’s, human, ours, so that each of us individually and all of us assembled together in the Divine-human body of Christ, the Church, might become god-men, having attained ‘to the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ’ (Eph 4:12-13). Therefore Christmas, the day of the birth of the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the greatest and most important day in the history of all the worlds in which man moves and lives.”

~ St. Nikolai Velimirovich

“... the Lord... Word of God... came down to earth and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin and became man, without change becoming our equal in all things save sin, so that, traversing all that which is ours, He might re-forged and make that first man anew and, through him, all of us who were begotten and came into being from him and are like him who engendered us. Since, because Adam who engendered us had become corruptible and mortal—and, I will add, deaf and blind – and, by reason of his transgression, both naked and insensible of his divine vesture, such being the man of dust, so as well have they all become who were born of him: of dust, corruptible, mortal, deaf, blind, naked and insensible, differing in no way from the irrational animals or, better, become even worse than the beasts as having embraced all the latter’s passions and taken them into themselves.”

~ *St. Symeon the New Theologian*

"Wherefore, not those that are slandered, but the slanderers, have need to be anxious, and to tremble, for the former are not constrained to answer for themselves, touching the evil things which are said of them, but the latter will have to answer for the evil they have spoken, and over these impends the whole danger."

~ *St. John Chrysostom*

+++++

## **ST. SOPHRONY: SPIRITUAL EXCERPTS**

The following excerpts are from the book, *Words of Life*, extracts from Fr. Sophrony’s spiritual talks, published by the Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Essex (1996).

### **Depression**

The word *accidie* means etymologically, “lack of care”, i.e., about one’s salvation. With few exceptions, all humanity is now living in a state of *accidie*. People become indifferent about their salvation. They do not seek divine life. They confine themselves to forms of life which appertain to the flesh, to everyday needs, to the passions of this world, to

mundane activities. God, though, created us out of nothing, in the image of the Absolute and after His likeness. If this revelation is true, the absence of concern for salvation is nothing else than the death of the human person.

Despair is the loss of consciousness that God wants to give us eternal life. The world is living in despair. People have condemned themselves to death. We must struggle resolutely against despondency.

### **The wisdom of this world**

The wisdom of this world cannot save the world. The parliaments, the governments, the complex organizations of the most advanced contemporary states, are powerless. Humanity suffers without limit. The only solution is to find within us the wisdom and the resolve not to live according to the ideas of this world, but to follow Christ.

How can we find our way? According to the Gospel, Christ is our way.

### **Love your enemies**

“Love your enemies.” Yes, it is difficult. Yes, it is painful, But the moral beauty of Christ attracts us to such a degree that we are ready to bear all trial, as long as we are being raised up into His Spirit. There is no other choice.

Christ has given His divine life to those who are created in His image, but the only response He received was hatred. Today, after two thousand years of Christianity, what do we see? The contemporary world is losing Christ, losing eternal life, more and more. The deep darkness of sinful passions, hatred, domination, wars of all kinds, are what make up our earthly existence. In this situation, Christ has given the commandment to those who decide to follow Him: “Love your enemies.” Why is the world afraid of such a God? Can one find a better principle than this: bless those who curse you, love your enemies?

### **Suffering**

One cannot love without suffering. The greatest pain is that of loving to the utmost. Christ loved so much that He gave

Himself up to a terrible death. The saints too. Paradise always costs this price. Prayer for the world is the fruit of extremely deep and acute suffering.

When we decide to follow Christ, every day of our life becomes a day of suffering, of weeping, of pain. Sometimes this question arise in us: “Lord, why hast Thou created us thus, that we must go through so much suffering?” We do not manage to understand that this negative experience is the way of salvation.

Earthly existence is for man an endless suffering. Why do we bear all this? Because the Creator has come and has dwelt among us. And we now know Him personally.

### **Repentance**

Of course, it is better not to sin. But repentance, if it is like a flame, can restore every loss.

We must preserve the spirit of repentance all our life, right to the end. Repentance is the basis of all ascetic and spiritual life. The feeling, or intuition, of sin can become so acute in us that it really engenders a repentance from the depths of our being.

We may weep for hours, for weeks, for years, before our being is completely regenerated by the word of Christ, by His commandments, and above all, by the grace of the Holy Spirit. This transformation of our being, after the fall of Adam, requires great efforts. And a long time.

Repentance has no end on earth, because the end of repentance would mean that we had become like Christ in everything. The least difference between Christ and ourselves requires of us deep repentance: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon us.” This word expresses the difference that we feel between Him, the absolute and eternal Being, and ourselves. “If we are not really like the Lord in all things, how can we dwell eternally with Him?” wonders Saint Symeon the New Theologian. For Him, as for us, it is impossible. The only thing that remains for us is to have patience.

The way towards knowledge of God goes above all via faith, the love of Christ, and repentance.

May God give you all the spirit of repentance. Weep over your faults; weep, that your heart may not dry up.