

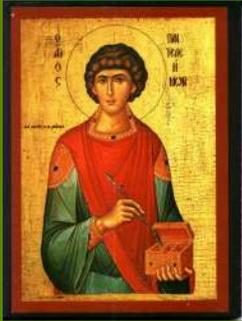
St. Panteleimon Orthodox Church

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

Fr. Andrew Bartek, Rector V. Rev. Anthony Spengler, Attached

Protodeacon Robert Northrup Reader James Tilghman

Parish Council President: Nicholas Cavaligos



Sunday, February 14, 2016

Gospel: St. Luke 19:1-10

Tone 4

Epistle: 1 Timothy 4:9-15

37th Sunday after Pentecost / Ven. Auxentius

St. Cyril, Teacher of the Slavs

February Bulletin Sponsor

Mr. & Mrs. Andre Davik for the Health of the Family

Liturgical & Event Schedule

TWO WEEK BULLETIN

Sunday, February 14

9:10 am: Hours

9:30 am: D. L. / 40 Day Panachida / Social @
Rectory Basement / Church School

4:00-9 pm: Valentine Dinner @ Sam's Rest.

Monday, February 15

2:00 pm: Pick up kids from Camp

Tuesday, February 16

7:00 pm: Village of Summit Board Meeting

7:30 pm: Bible Study (Church Rectory)

Wednesday, February 17

7:00 pm: Pan Orthodox Teen Night

Saturday, February 20

10:00 am Put Church basement back together

4:00 pm: Great Vespers (**NOTE TIME**)

Sunday, February 21

9:10 am: Hours

9:30 am: D. L. / 40 Day Panachida / Memorial
Sunday / Social (Church Hall) /
Church School

11:45 am: Monthly Board Meeting

Noon-5pm: Winter Feast @ Rocor Cathedral
Des Plaines

Tuesday, February 23

10:00 am: Deanery Meeting

Christ the Saviour, Chicago

7:30 pm: Orthodoxy 101 Class

Saturday, February 27

8:00 am: Carson Day Fundraiser Event

3:00 pm: Great Vespers

4:00-8 pm: Spaghetti Dinner- Fundraiser (in
our basement)

Sunday, February 28

9:10 am: Hours

9:30 am: D.L. / 40 Day Panachida / Social /
Church School

ENJOY

FAST FREE WEEK: February 22nd-26th

2016 - SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

February: St Vladimir's Seminary



This collection will take place during the Litany before the *Our Father*. Or you can speak to Steve Grabavoy to contribute.

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday July 24:

Our Annual Patronal Feast Day Celebration
(Noon-???)

Sunday August 28:

Our 2nd Annual Community Picnic (Noon-
4:00pm or 5:00pm)

40 Days Eternal Memory

February 7: Bernice McGurk

February 14: Helen Pender

February 21: Matthew Lyons / Catherine

February 27: Terrorist attack @ Palestine Univ.
/ 16 Marines killed in helicopter crash in
Hawaii / Joshua Zdinak

March 13: Jean Mueller / Mat. Anna / Archi-
mandrite Athanasys / Archpriest John Udics

SUNDAY OF ZACCHEUS

As salvation came to the house of Zaccheus by Your entrance, O Christ; likewise now by the entrance of your sacred ministers, and Your holy angels with them, grant peace to this house and mercifully bless it, saving and enlightening all who live within. *Troparion*

7549 West 61st Place, Summit, Illinois 60501

Rectory 708-552-5276 / Cell 570-212-8747

website: <http://www.saintpanteleimon.org/>



We realized over **\$1,100** from our Fish Fry.

I personally want to thank the following people for staying all day: Nick C, Vitaley, Marcia, Mat. Susan, Linda D, and Andrei D.

A huge thank you for those who came and helped out during the morning or evening session: Liz W, Karen V (came after work), Proto Deacon (came after work), Joann C (came after work).

Thanks to all the parishioners who came & supported this fundraiser. I was very happy to see a large turn out from our sister parishes (St Peter & Paul, Archangel Michael & St Luke's).

Once again the Mayor & some Village Trustees were at the event. Some firefighters came out, as well, for the first time to help support us.

I can't thank Sam enough for what we did for us with this event. Nick, the Proto-Deacon, Joann, Sam, his wife and I were at the restaurant breading fish the night before for close to 4 hrs. Sam donated not only his business but helped purchase many things to help us out. Plus he cooked all day. His and his wife's generosity are without bounds.

Reminders:

- If you are planning to attend his Valentine dinner on Sunday, you must call before Friday to let him know you are coming & what you want to eat.
- Every Fri day (beginning this Friday) & Wednesday is the *All You Can Eat Fish* at his restaurant, until our Good Friday in April. He will donate 20% of the proceeds to our church.

Our Fish Fry started out very strong. By the end of lunch we were in the black from our expenses. Unfortunately, the Polish priest got our up coming Spaghetti Dinner Flyer mixed up with our Fish Fry so the 3 Masses in the evening did not do as well because they thought we were having meatballs. It was an honest mistake by Father from St. Blasé. It just wasn't making any sense to me why we were not doing well. Now I understand why.

There were some people who had lunch and came back for dinner. We made a huge splash with people in this event.

Please start promoting our next fundraiser, Spaghetti Dinner. (See next column.) The dinner will be held here at church. The new floor should be in place. We can get the basement almost back to normal. The walls or cabinets won't be up, but we can eat at tables. If you work on weekends, tell your coworkers.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

When: Saturday February 27

Time: 4:00- 8:00 pm

Menu:

Salad / Bread / Marinara Sauce / Meatballs / Coffee / Tea / Soda / dessert

Alcoholic Beverages available for Dine in only

Cost: \$10 person

Call ahead for seating or take outs.

Free Delivery for 10 orders or more to same address.

ENGAGING ORTHODOXY: INAUGURAL SPEAKER'S SERIES

When: Saturday, March 5

Time: 10:00am-noon & 1:00pm-3:00pm

Where: \

North Park University (Anderson Chapel)
3225 W Foster Ave., Chicago, IL 60625

Cost: Free

"The Unchanging Gospel in an Ever-Changing Culture"

In his inaugural lecture, Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, will present an Eastern Orthodox understanding of the gospel, and offer practical guidance on how local churches may keep it clear and central for each generation.

Respondents will be:

- Father John Behr, Dean, St Vladimir's Seminary
- Dr Hauna Ondrey, Teaching Fellow in Church History, North Park Seminary
- Dr Marcus Plested, Associate Professor of Theology, Marquette University

Sessions will be moderated by Bradley Nassif, Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies, North Park University.

Please call 773-244-6213 for additional information.

Orthodoxy is on the cusp of a major theological renaissance in the 21st Century. This annual series will help establish Orthodox Theology as a vital religious force in American life & thought.

Flier on Bulletin Board in Church Basement!

UP COMING EVENTS

DINER FRANCAIS

Where: Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago

When: February 21

Time: Begins @ 11:30 am

Price: Cost \$30

11:30 am: Wine tasting by Holy Trinity's own Tony Scott followed by an elegant French Dinner while supporting Holy Trinity Cathedral.

Menu: All Courses served with wine

Salade Verte w/ Crème Frache Dressing / Boeuf Bourguignon over Noodles / warm French Rolls / Iced Eiffel Tower Sugar Cookie & coffee

Seating is limited. Contact Lardin for more information or to purchase tickets: krlardin@gmail.com or 773-882-9282

Flier on Bulletin Board in Basement

RUSSIAN WINTER FESTIVAL

When: Sunday February 21st

Time: Noon-5:00pm

Where:

Holy Virgin Protection Russian Orthodox Cathedral
1800 Lee Street
Des Plaines, IL

Menu: Sweet & Savory Ryssian Treats / Vodka Tasting, / Ryssian Tea / Dancers, Singers, Musicians / Folk & Craft Bazaar / Snow Maiden's Castle & kids Krafts

Donation: \$2

NOTE: Please attend if possible. This is the church were the Russian Dancers performed at our Community Picnic last year for free. They will be performing again this year as we expand our picnic to a Block Party.

Flier on bulletin Board in Basement!

6TH ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago Family Synaxis presents the 6th Annual Men's Retreat to be held at the new St. Iakovos Retreat Center. This retreat will take place:

Friday February 26- 7:00pm - Saturday February 27- 300pm.

Register now @ [www.gocfamilysynaxis.org / mens-retreat](http://www.gocfamilysynaxis.org/mens-retreat).

Any questions: chicago.family.synaxis@gmail.com

Flier on Bulletin Board in Church Basement!

19TH OCMC MISSION TEAM DINNER

When: Thursday March 10

Where:

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
2350 East Dempster Street
Des Plaines, IL 60016

Cost: \$35

Featuring Special Guest

Very Rev Dr Chad Hatfield
Chancellor, CEO & Professor of Missiology @ St Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary

Doors open @ 6:30pm

Please reserve your reservation or to make donation:

Mail:

Missions Team Chicago
388 Adams Ave
Glencoe, IL 60022

Email: MTCBenefit@yahoo.com

On line: www.MissionTeamChicago.org

In Memoriam: Jean M. Mueller

Jean M. Mueller [nee Lamboy], beloved mother of Archpriest Thomas Mueller, Dean of the Chicago Deanery and Rector of Saints Cyril and Methodius Church here, and dear grandmother of Priest Elijah Mueller, Priest-in-Charge of Saint Makarios the Great Mission, Hyde Park-Chicago, IL, fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, February 8, 2016 at the age of 101.

Jean was a long-time member of Saints Cyril and Methodius Church, where among other ministries she served on the parish council and taught Church school. She was especially active in the Diocese of the Midwest in the 1980s and 1990s in a variety of capacities.

She was predeceased by her beloved husband Albert V. Mueller and her dear daughter-in-law Matushka Gina Mueller. In addition to Fathers Thomas and Elijah [Rebecca], she is survived by sons Timothy [Jennie], Theodore [Carole], and Terry; grandchildren Carrie [Nelson] Batalon, Savva [Tina] Mueller, Daria [Said] Hamideh, and Joel, Paul and Steven Mueller; ten great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Jean was laid to rest this past Friday.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Jean's memory to Saints Cyril and Methodius Church, 2505 South 30th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53215.

May Jean's memory be eternal!

In Memoriam: Matushka Anna Labun

Matushka Anna Labun, 92, wife of the late Archpriest Jan Labun, fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, February 8, 2016.

A devoted member of Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, Matushka Anna was born in Becherov, Czechoslovakia April 17, 1923, the daughter of Vasil and Anastasia Kokos. Together with her family, she emigrated to the US in 1969, after which her husband was assigned Pastor of Christ the Savior Church, Rockford, IL. She faithfully ministered alongside her husband until his untimely repose in 1980. Most recently, on September 20, 2015, His Grace, Bishop Paul of Chicago presented a diocesan gramota in recognition of Matushka Anna's living witness and many years of ministry to the Holy Orthodox Church along her husband.

Matushka Anna is survived by three sons — Jan [Patricia], Vladimir [Carol], and Nicholas [Susan] — and seven grandchildren.

Matushka was laid to rest this past Thursday. In lieu of flowers, donations in Matushka Anna's memory may be sent to Christ the Savior Church, 927 North LaSalle, Chicago, IL 60610. May Matushka's memory be eternal!

Archpriest John Udics

Archpriest John J. Udics, 67, fell asleep in the Lord as a result of complications from surgery at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital here on Wednesday afternoon, February 3, 2016.

Born February 11, 1948 in Cleveland, OH, the son of Joseph and Mary [Konet] Udics, he and his family were parishioners of Saint Theodosius Cathedral, where he attended Christian education classes, assisted as an altar server, sang in the choir, and rarely missed a service. A talented musician, he played piano and several wind instruments and had a wonderful singing voice. After high school, he attended The College of Wooster, Wooster, OH, for one year before transferring to Iona College, New Rochelle, NY while also enrolling at [Saint Vladimir's Seminary](#), Yonkers, NY. He received a B.A. from Iona in Philosophy. He also was fluent in French, Japanese, and Russian.

During his final year at Saint Vladimir's, he worked as an intern at the Holy Ascension of Our Lord Cathedral, Unalaska, AK. He also participated in the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches at Bossey, Switzerland.

After completing his education, he taught French at Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka, AK. He also worked in Alameda, CA and Portland, OR. When seminary classmates informed him of an opportunity to work in Japan, he relocated to Tokyo, where he taught English to Japanese students for several years. While in Japan, he was ordained to the diaconate at Tokyo's Holy Resurrection Cathedral (Nikolai-do).

After returning to the US, he found himself at [Saint Tikhon's Seminary](#), South Canaan, PA, where he conducted research for his thesis to complete the requirements for his Master of Divinity degree. While there, he worked in the seminary library, served as a deacon at the monastery church, and later was elevated to the dignity of protodeacon. It was at Saint Tikhon's that, on January 30, 1985, he was ordained to the priesthood by His Grace, Bishop Herman of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania. He was assigned Rector of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Church, Philadelphia, which he served until 2009, when he relocated to South Plainfield, NJ as Pastor of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In 2010, he was assigned Pastor of Herkimer's Saints Peter and Paul Church, which he served until his repose. *Continued Page 10*

Prayer List : UPDATED 1-17-16

Prizsts: Anthony Spenglar, John Kuchta, James Gleason (*Fr. 's spiritual father*), ***Ted Bobosh**, ***Moses Berry**, ***John Magramm**, John Duranko, Lev Holowoty, ***Anastassy Fehr**, ***Leonid Kishkovsky**, ***Fr. John Zdinak**, * **Fr. Daniel Rental** , ***Fr. George Havrila**, ***Fr. Andrew Harrison**

Dzacons: NONE

Matushka: Kristy Lollar & her unborn child, ***Carol Janacek**, Pani Patricia Duranko, ***Cindy Zdinak**

Parishionzrs: Karen Muzyka, Mark Hruban, Ronald Stachowiak, Rebecca Eggers, Jason Kirnbauer, Sonja Harris, Andrei Davik

Parishionzr's Friends / Family: Donna Parhas (*Nick's Cousin*), Ron (*Mark's Friend*), Mary Ann Magerko, John Magerko, Stephen Holly (*Fr. 's cousin*), George Cavaligos (*Nick's brother*), Christos Parhas (*Nick's cousin*), Constantine Cavaligos (*Nick's dad*), John Hartel (*Joann's Step-dad*), Sandra (*Karen's sister*), Erika Northrup, Walter Litzie (*Fr. 's cousin*), Danielle Krush, Mark Svava, Linda Davik, Mary Northrup, Sandra Leonchik, Dianne Northrup, Raymond Northrup, Joey Krush, Carol Bregin (*Friend of Lynn*), Ann Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), George Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), Bruce (*Fr. Kurt's brother*), Christine & her unborn baby, Chrissy Marron, Kelly Flynn , Baby Faith, Daniel Tiani (*friend of Beccky Eggers*), Vivian (*friend of Beccky Eggers*), Tim Kendra (*Rich Wolfe's father*), Joan (*Hruban friend*), Julianna (*Hruban Family*), June (*Hruban Friend*), Jacob (*Spengler Family*), Emilian (*Spengler Family*), Joyce (*Spengler Family*)

Other Requests: Lucille (*Duke*), Dianne (*Bill Rudolph*), Elizabeth Lilos, Jemsey Pradun, Mae Joanna Bass, Hermenegil (*Neighbor*), Lidiya (*Neighbor*), Cathleen Rebollar, Patricia Schuster, ***John Sedor**, * **Maria Sokolova & her 3 new born babies (Lydia, Yekaterina, Helena)**, * **Daria Petrykowski**

Military: Amber, Caleb, Nicholas, David, Timothy, Robert, Kristen, Matthew, Brian, Daniel, Joseph, Joseph (*Fr. 's cousin*)

Captivz: Metropolitan Paul (*Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo*), Archbishop John (*Syriac Archdiocese of Aleppo*)

For the UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers in & around Syria / Those suffering persecution in Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and throughout the world / Those held captive throughout the world.

Additions or removals from the list? Please notify Fr. Andrew. (***Bishop Request**) ON:Fr. Andrew Harrison

Venetian Gardens Restaurant Valentine's Day Dinner

Sunday February 14



Cost: \$20 a person

Menu: choice of

- Filet Mignon w/ Doubled Baked Potato & Grilled Asparagus
- Marinated Pork Tenderloin Medallions w/ Mashed Potatoes & Grilled Asparagus
- Portabello Mushrooms Stuffed w/Spinach and Feta Cheese, Wild Rice & Grilled Asparagus

All meals come with choice of Soup or Salad & a Dessert.

Reservations & meal selection are required by February 10th.
Call 708-458-0900.

Restaurant address: 6955 S. Roberts Rd., Bridgeview, IL
(Less than 1.5 miles from our church)

SUNDAY OF PUBLICAN & PHARISEE

O faithful, let us repeat the words of the Publican who said in the Temple: "O God be merciful to me," so that together with him we may receive forgiveness of our sins without falling into error of the boastful Pharisee. Matins Canon, Ode 8

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

Hasten to open your fatherly arms, O Lord, for I have foolishly wasted my whole life. In the inexhaustible treasury of your mercy, O Saviour, do not despise the poverty of my heart. I cry to You, O Lord, full of compunction: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.
Matins Sessional Hymn, Tone 1

F E B R U A R Y

HAPPY BIRTHDAY		ANNIVERSARY
2- John Grabavoy Jr 19 Vitaly Muzyka 19- Robert Johnson 23- Chrissy Marron	10- Luba Johnson 19- Sonia Harris 22- Scott Eggers	2-09-80: Nicholas & Joann Cavaligos 2-10-73 The Most Blessed Herman retired Metropolitan 2-21-14 The Rt. Rev. David Bishop of Sitka & of Alaska

If there are those names to be added or removed, please contact Fr. Andrew. He would like to list all members of your family Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

In blessed repose: F E B R U A R Y

1-Alexander Grabavoy (14) 9- Olga Akers (14) 8- Natalie Leonchik (98) 10- Alexandra L. Samuta (86) 12- Mary Stopka (86) 12- Helene W Suchlak (06) 12- Mitrofan (Mike) Grabavoy (61) 16- Baby Girl Grabavoy (71) 17- Metropolitan Orestes (77)	18- Anthony John Nausieda (06) 20- Nicholas Tarchuk (99) 23- Mary Klimiuk (91) 27- Ivan Rosannacha (84) 1940: Ipolit Denika Maria Yakel Leontiy Trofimovich	1941: Dimitri Schhelkun Efirna Kuyava
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Remember those who have gone before us in prayer. If there is a name missing from the above list, please speak to Fr. Andrew to have them added.

UPDATED JANUARY 2016

Bulletin Sponsor: Would you be interested in being a bulletin sponsor in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one or friend? Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Services for that month. Donation: \$40 for the month.

Memorial Candle(s): *(Give names to Fr. Andrew)*

Option 1: The Tray of Candles under the Cross is now the area of remembrance for the deceased. If you would like the tray of candles placed in memory of a deceased loved one, the suggested donation is \$30. The Sponsors will be remembered during the Divine Services for that Sunday.

Option 2: One of the small Tray's under the Theotokos in the back of the Church. Donation \$25

Option 3: If this tray is full, one or more candles may be gotten at the candle desk & be placed in the sand box.

Candles for the Health of a Loved One *(Speak to Fr. Andrew to make arrangements)*

Option 1: One of The small tray's of 40 candles in front of the icon of woman saints in the back of the Church - donation \$25.

Option 2: The altar candles in the Sanctuary & Eternal Light candle - donation \$20.

Option 3: If Candles are filled more candles may be gotten at the candle desk & placed in the sand box.

Monthly Panachida Service: The third Sunday of each month there will be a Panachida. If you would like your loved one(s) to be remembered, please give a list of names to Fr. Andrew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month. If there is a remembrance (newly departed or 40th day remembrance) of your family or friends we will remember them on the closest Sunday otherwise they will be remembered on the third Sunday. If it is an remembrance not related to our parish family we will just sing Memory Eternal on the 40 Day remembrance.

Hospitalization/Shut-ins: If anyone goes into hospital, or is a shut-in, please let Fr. Andrew know as soon as possible so he can attend to them and their family members.

Celebration? Achievement?: Your spiritual family would like to share in your achievement, celebration, and accomplishment. Send in a picture or email to Fr. Andrew, by Wednesday @ 5:00 pm so he can place it in the bulletin!

Archimandrite Athanasy [Mastalski]

Archimandrite Athanasy [Mastalski] of [Saint Tikhon's Monastery](#) here fell asleep in the Lord on Friday, February 5, 2016.

Born in Philadelphia, PA on June 24, 1946, the son of Andrew and Anna Mastalski, he was ordained to the diaconate in 1975, and in the following year to the priesthood, by His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon [Rklitsky] of Washington of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia [ROCOR]. In December 1978, His Eminence, Metropolitan Philaret [Voznesensky], First Hierarch of ROCOR, tonsured him to monastic rank.

Father Athanasy served the Joy of All Who Sorrow Church, Philadelphia, PA; Holy Protection Church, New Brunswick, NJ; and Saint Nicholas Church, Red Bank, NJ. He also served at the convents in the Holy Land – Holy Ascension on the Mount of Olives and the Gethsemane Convent. In December 2005, His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus [Skurla], First Hierarch of ROCOR, elevated Father Athanasy to the dignity of Archimandrite.

For many years, Archimandrite Athanasy was the guardian of the Myrrh-Streaming Icon of the Holy Righteous Anna, the Mother of the Most Holy Theotokos, with which he visited many churches and monasteries in the dioceses of the ROCOR. The holy icon—painted in the Mount of Olives Convent by the Nun Mastridia—began to stream myrrh after it was brought to the US. It was widely known that in his childhood, Father Athanasy had been seriously injured in a fall. After praying for Saint Anna's intercession, he pledged to commission a hand-painted icon in her honor. He spent the final years of his earthly life at Saint Tikhon's Monastery.

He was laid to rest this past Wed.

If Chrysostom had watched the Super Bowl!

By Fr. Steven Kostoff

The Super Bowl and the secular Super Sunday is now over. The colossal social phenomenon—the Super Bowl—was viewed by hundreds of millions of people worldwide this past Sunday. Not to be disparaging or dismissive, it might be wise to approach this phenomenon from the perspective of our shared Orthodox Christian faith. No sense carrying on about the hype and the madness. When all is said and done, it is what it is.

But I could not avoid speculating on how someone like St. John Chrysostom, who fell asleep in the Lord in AD 407,

would have approached the Super Bowl phenomenon in his own unique and pastoral manner. Of course, there is a huge chronological gap between Saint John's time and our own, but we also know that there 'is nothing new under the sun,' and we can discover some very close parallels just under the surface when comparing different eras and their cultures. Saint John very well knew and understood the lure of the "games" and other forms of public entertainment in his own time, as he lived in large, cosmopolitan and urban settings such as Constantinople and Antioch. Such urban settings invariably had a hippodrome—the equivalent of our stadiums—at the center of a teeming social milieu that was also open to public entertainment.

What is quite interesting in Saint John's pastoral approach is that even if there is an implicit criticism of these public forms of entertainment (as he was very critical of the "theatre" as it existed in his day), that was never his main concern. Saint John would employ what we would call today "sports" and other diverse forms of entertainment in order to exhort his flock to be vigilant and committed in its adherence to and practice of the Gospel. Being a "fan" of a sport is far from being a "member" of the Church. As a pastor, Saint John would challenge his flock to ensure that the great gap in that distinction is not somehow closed by lack of vigilance.

The great saint was fully aware of a kind of nominal membership in the Church, and he was quick to point out how erosive of genuine faith that lack of commitment could be for the entire flock under his pastoral care. Saint John was basically asking whether Christians are as committed to the Gospel and the life of the Church as they are adherents, participants and performers in the "entertainment industry" of the fourth and fifth centuries? Primarily, this would include athletes and actors. Do Christians show the same level of passion for the Gospel as do the fans of the games and theatre? Here is one example from among many of how Saint John used his rhetorical skills in challenging Christians on this front: "We run eagerly to dances and amusements. We listen with pleasure to the foolishness of singers. We enjoy the foul words of actors for hours without getting bored. And yet when God speaks we yawn, we scratch ourselves and feel dizzy. Most people would run rabidly to the horse track, although there is no roof there to protect the audience from rain, even when it rains heavily or when the wind is lifting everything. They don't mind bad weather or the cold or the distance. Nothing keeps them in their homes. When they are about to go to church, however, then the soft rain becomes an obstacle to them. And if you ask them who Amos or Obadiah is, or how many prophets or apostles there are, they can't even open their mouths. Yet they can tell you every detail about the horses, the singers and the actors. What kind of state is this?" *Continued on Page 8*

St John Continued

Yet, this rhetorical deflation of the theatre and games serves as a backdrop that only intensifies the strength of his descriptions of the manifold riches of the Church, especially the Eucharist. From the same homily, here is Saint John's impassioned and rhetorically brilliant description of the glory of the Church: "The Church is the foundation of virtue and the school of spiritual life. Just cross its threshold at any time, and immediately you forget daily cares. Pass inside, and a spiritual ray will surround your soul. This stillness causes awe and teaches the Christian life. It raises up your train of thought and doesn't allow you to remember present things. It transports you from earth to Heaven. And if the gain is so great when a worship service is not even taking place, just think, when the Liturgy is performed—and the prophets teach, the Apostles preach the Gospel, Christ is among believers, God the Father accepts the performed sacrifice, and the Holy Spirit grants His own rejoicing—what great benefit floods those who have attended church as they leave the church. The joy of anyone who rejoices is preserved in the Church. The gladness of the embittered, the rejoicing of the saddened, the refreshment of the tortured, the comfort of the tired, all are found in the Church. Because Christ says, 'Come to me, all who are tired and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest' [Matthew 11:28]. What is more longed for than [to hear] this Voice? What sweeter than this invitation? The Lord is calling you to a Banquet when He invites you to church. He urges you to be comforted from toils and He transports you to a place of comfort from pain, because He lightens you from the burden of sins. He heals distress with spiritual enjoyment, and sadness with joy."

Saint John was not called Chrysostom—the "Golden mouthed"—for nothing! He does not admonish his flock in this homily to give up on the games and other forms of entertainment; but he surely makes it clear that there is no comparison between the two. And that, therefore, our desire and commitment cannot be so misplaced to somehow put the two on the same level of attraction. The perfectly legitimate desire to "fit in" with one's neighbors and participate in socially popular events must be balanced by an awareness of not being fully of the world once one is baptized into the Church.

Bearing all of that in mind, if I were to write in the spirit of Saint John and try to apply his approach to parish life in the contemporary world, I would make the following pastoral "suggestions" based on the recent Super Bowl—or for that matter, any existing commitment we might have to the world of professional sports/entertainment.

If you watched the Super Bowl from its opening kick-off to the end of the game, but if you chronically arrive late for the opening doxology of "Blessed is the Kingdom" at the

Liturgy, then it may be time to show the same commitment to the Liturgy and arrive at the beginning. That opening doxology opens us up to a reality hardly matched by an opening kick-off.

If you spent time watching all of the pre-game hype and analysis, all meant to prepare you for the game, but if you have never given much thought to arriving before the Liturgy for the reading of the Hours; then I would suggest arriving in church before the actual Liturgy begins in time for the pre-Eucharist chanting of those very Hours—a mere 20 minutes. This way you are able to settle in and calm down a bit in preparation for the Liturgy that will shortly unfold in all of its majesty.

If you have been engaged in some of the (endless) post-game analysis since last Sunday; or watched "highlights" of the game, or recall some of the more significant and game-changing plays of the game, but if you struggle by mid-week to remember what the Gospel was at last Sunday's Liturgy, then I would suggest engaging in some post-Liturgy analysis of the Gospel that you heard on any given Sunday with family and/or friends (or within your own mind and heart). Such "analysis" can eventually become genuine meditation of even contemplation.

This is all more than possible, according to Saint John, because of the inexhaustible riches of the Liturgy. Once again, Saint John exhorts us to leave the Liturgy as changed human beings, having communed of the Risen Lord: "Let us depart from the Divine Liturgy like lions who are producing fire, having become fearsome even to the devil, because the holy Blood of the Lord that we commune waters our souls and gives us great strength. When we commune of it worthily, it chases the demons far away and brings the angels and the Lord of the angels near us. This Blood is the salvation of our souls; with this the soul is washed, with this it is adorned. This Blood makes our minds brighter than fire; this makes our souls brighter than gold."

We are slowly drawing near to the Church's own "Super Sunday" which is, of course, Pascha. Let our preparation and desire for that day far surpass any of our other passions or commitments, for the Lord taught us, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" [Matthew 6:21].