

The Contemplative Life

for the Non-Monastic

A common complaint I get from people is that “we can’t live a contemplative life in the modern world, Father. There’s no time. I just don’t have several hours a day to spend in prayer.” This is a complaint that I can empathize with. Most of us don’t live a cloistered life behind monastery walls yet the church still calls us to learn to be “holy ones of God,” or Saints. (ἅγιος, *ia, on agios, ia, on* – is the Greek for “holy, transliterating literally as “a,” not, and “gis” (γηῆς), earth, so to be a saint is to be “not of the earth.”)

Thus, each and every one of us is called to find ways in our lives to cultivate stillness in hesychastic prayer and *BE* contemplative so we can purify our hearts and become saints. The question is, then, how do we do this while living in the world. First and foremost, we have to *DO* it. We can’t talk about it, we can’t have positive intentions, we must make the time to do this.

Anyone who has been in Calhan for any length of time has likely heard my teachings on prayer. I know that the “prescribed prayers” of the Orthodox Church can be overwhelming. When you wake up and the dog has messed up the carpet, the cattle are out, the kid is sick and you are not even dressed yet, looking at the prayer book can be thoroughly intimidating. Yet our prayers can be short and, if said with intensity, will bring us to Holiness and help us become true saints, or men and women who are not of this earth! As I have said repeatedly, make “Glory to Thee, O God” part of your prayers as soon as your feet hit the ground, then – after the messes are cleaned up – return to the prayer corner and follow the rule of Seraphim of Sarov and go down the list of a spiritual routine I have handed out and posted on the website..

Most importantly, take the time to contemplate in your prayers. Do it at the end of each day after reading the scripture, and focus your contemplations on three things:

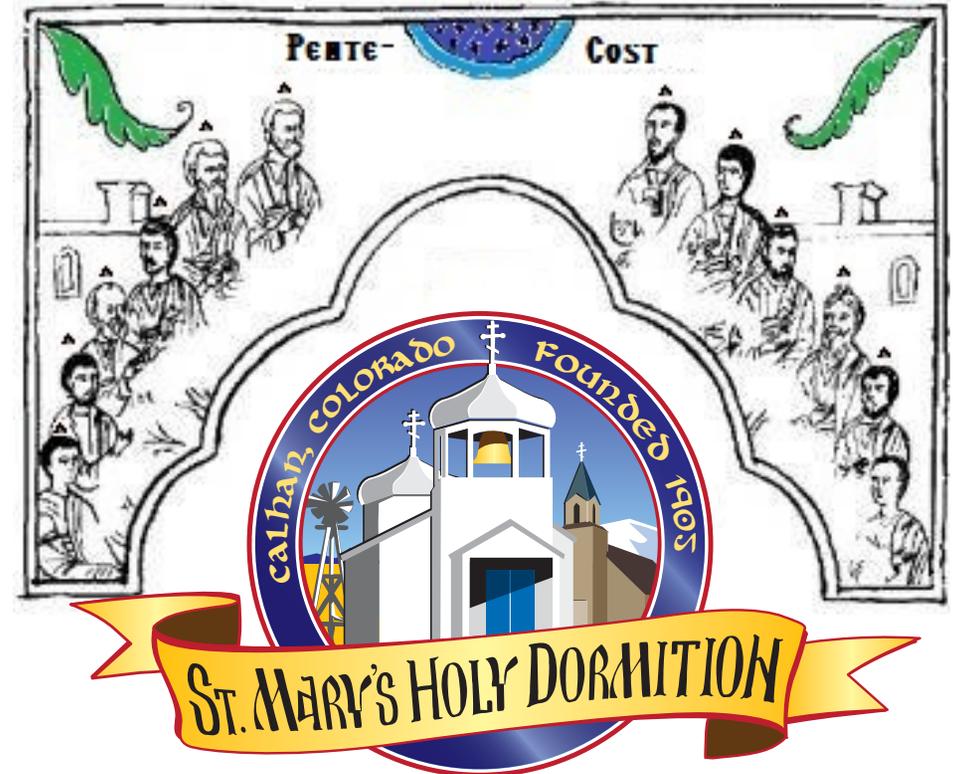
1. Where did I find Christ in my community today?
2. Where did I bring Christ to my community today?
3. Where, in my dealings with the world, did I fail to be Christlike today?

These three contemplations remind us, daily, to both look for Christ everywhere, represent Christ everywhere, and reflect on where we fail to do this (repentance) so we remember that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23) and do not become arrogant

Fr. Simeon B. Johnson
June II, 2017 – Sunday of All Saints

SUNDAY BULLETIN

11 June 2017



ORTHODOX CHURCH
CALHAN, COLORADO

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Priest—Rev. Simeon B. Johnson, Rector



RECTOR'S WELCOME

Christ is in our midst! He is, and ever shall be!

Welcome to St. Mary's Orthodox Church. We are a small, multi-ethnic parish in Calhan, Colorado. While the parish was founded by Slovak pioneers, we welcome everyone, no matter what your ancestry.

If this is your first time here, thank you for worshipping with us.

After services, we would like to invite everyone to the Parish hall across the street for coffee and fellowship.

Fr. Simeon B. Johnson—Rector

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

Sunday, June 11—*All Saints*

9:30 AM—Divine Liturgy, followed by fellowship.
1:00 PM—Parish Council/Sisterhood

Saturday, June 17

5:30 PM—Great Vespers & confession.

Sunday, June 18—*All Saints of North America*

9:30 AM—Divine Liturgy followed by fellowship.

Formal "grave blessing season" ended with the Feast of Ascension. If, however, you would like graves blessed at any other cemetery, please speak to Father and we'll schedule a time.

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

June 16 – Alvin Eurich

June 19 – Fr. Simeon and Mat. Beth Johnson

THE HOLY FIRE FROM JERUSALEM

On Wednesday, May 10, 2017, the Holy Fire made its way to Calhan from Jerusalem. A small group of us were here to greet the fire, sing Christ is Risen, and light several vigil candles from this Holy Fire.

The Holy Fire is an annual event at the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. The Patriarch enters the Sepulcher where Christ was buried; he carries nothing but a candle, and the local authorities traditionally verify that there is nothing to start a fire with, either in the sepulcher or on the Orthodox Patriarch's person.

He enters the tomb and the church is darkened. While he is there, the Holy Fire descends. It is a bluish fire that does not burn those it touches. Orthodoxy teaches that this fire is the Uncreated Light of God, as revealed at the Transfiguration. In a great miracle and mystery, this fire lights the candle of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. He brings this lit candle out of the sepulcher, chanting "Come, receive the light from the light that is never overtaken by night: and glorify Christ, who is risen from the dead." As he chants, the people rush forward to light their candles from this Holy Fire.

Now that we have this Holy Fire, it is important that we not let it go out! I have vigils lit from the Holy Fire on the altar, on the tomb, and in the candelabra over the Holy Doors. Since the "7 day vigils" only last 5-6 days any more, it will mean that we, as a parish, need to get in the habit of keeping these vigils going. The Holy Fire will be here as long as we can keep it here. Let's not let it go out!

Fr. Simeon