

Orthodoxy 101

Introduction

Intro to the Class

- ◆ History of the Catechumenate Process
- ◆ Class Schedule
- ◆ Special Events and Guests



Books and Resources

- ◆ Required: Entering the Orthodox Church
- ◆ Strongly Recommended: Orthodox Study Bible
- ◆ Recommended: Everywhere Present

Joining the Church

- ◆ Baptism/Chrismation is the means of joining a person to the Church
- ◆ Once a person is joined to the Church they become fully Christian. Why?

What is a Christian

- ◆ Someone who follows Christ
 - ◆ Obeys His Will
 - ◆ Is united to Him in the Sacraments
- ◆ What is Orthodox Christianity?
 - ◆ Orthodox - Right Belief. However the term Doxa also means Glory - so implies correct worship

Christ

- ♦ Χριστός - the anointed one
 - ♦ Anointed by God
 - ♦ The Messiah of the Old Testament
- ♦ Θεάνθρωπος - God/Man. Jesus Christ is God and Man.
 - ♦ Not a man who becomes divine
 - ♦ Not God pretending to be man
 - ♦ Both God and Man

Mankind Looks for Messiah

- ◆ God-man from the West according to Confucius
- ◆ Babylonians expected a savior who was God become man
- ◆ Hindus, Greeks, Romans, etc. expected the arrival of a redeemer

Fullness of Time

- ◆ From St. Paul's letter to the Galatians: "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born[a] of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."
- ◆ The Time was Right!

More About Christ

- ◆ Born of the Virgin Mary, by the Holy Spirit
- ◆ The Son of God from eternity, becomes the Son of Man
- ◆ He overcame Sin and Death
- ◆ Christ resurrected Human Nature
- ◆ Christ is not a supremely moral man, or the leader of a religion, He is the redeemer of mankind

Three Key Take Aways

- ♦ What Christ Said
 - ♦ His teachings
 - ♦ Directions about how we should live if we seek to be united with Him
 - ♦ Parables - describe deep realities about the world
- ♦ What He Did
 - ♦ Miracles
 - ♦ Healing
 - ♦ Caring for the poor and sick
- ♦ What He Suffered
 - ♦ Imprisonment, mocking, crucifixion, and death
- ♦ Everything leading to the triumphant resurrection



From the 9th Hour of the Eve of Nativity

- ◆ Today He who holds the whole world in His hand is born from a Virgin. He who in essence is impalpable is swaddled in rags as a mortal. God who established the heavens of old in the beginning is lying in a manger. He who rained down manna for the people in the wilderness is breastfed with milk. He who is the Bridegroom of the Church is summoning Magi. And He, that Son of the Virgin, is accepting their gifts. We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. Show us also Your divine Epiphany.

From Vespers of the Nativity

- ◆ Come, let us rejoice in the Lord, as we tell about this mystery. The middle wall of separation has been broken down; the fiery sword has turned back, the Cherubim permits access to the tree of life; and I partake of the delight of Paradise, from which I was cast out because of disobedience. For the exact Image of the Father, the express Image of his eternity, takes the form of a servant, coming forth from a virgin Mother; and He undergoes no change. He remained what He was, true God; and He took up what he was not, becoming human in His love for humanity. Let us cry out to Him: "You who were born from a Virgin, O God, have mercy on us."

What, then are we to do

- ◆ We are fundamentally reborn, so that we are now leading a new life
- ◆ Being Orthodox, therefore, is not about following a list of rules, or just showing up to Church on Sunday (or on Pascha and Christmas)
- ◆ Two closely related ways of looking at what happens when we are joined to the Church:
 - ◆ We are reborn - of Water and the Spirit - so a new life
 - ◆ We are now, as members of the Church, a bride of Christ, so marriage serves an icon of our relationship with Christ

Homework

- ◆ Read the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)
- ◆ Read the introduction and first catechism from *Entering the Orthodox Church*