

*The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
Of North America*

*The Diocese of Eagle River and the Northwest  
Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Annunciation*

كنيسة البشارة الأرثوذكسية الأنطاكية

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Sunday July 31st, 2016

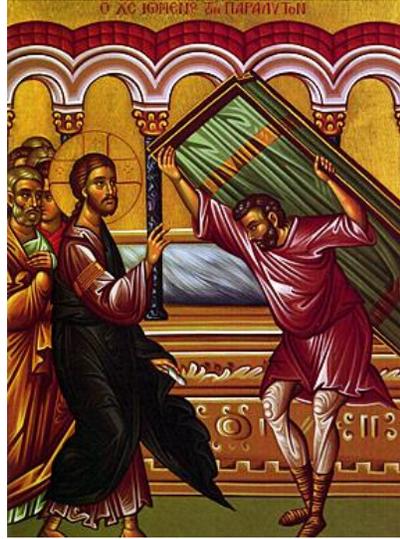
الأحد السادس بعد العنصرة

الأحد السادس من متى

**Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Saturday Service: Vespers at 6 PM**

**Sunday Services: Matins 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM**



**Changes in the Liturgy**

تغييرات في القداس

الايصوديكون

هلم لنسجد ونركع للمسيح ملكنا والهنا، خلصنا يا ابن الله يا من قام من بين الاموات، لنرتل لك هلوليا!

## Entrance Hymn

O Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.

Save us, O Son of God, who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

### طروبارية القيامة (بالحن الخامس)

لِنُسَبِّحْ نحن المؤمنين ونسجد للكلمة. المساوي للآب والروح في الازليّة وعدم الابتداء. المولود من العذراء لخلصنا. لأنة سرّ وارتضى بالجسد أن يعلو على الصليب. ويحتمل الموت وينهض الموتى بقيامته المجيدة.

### **Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone Five)**

Let us believers praise and worship the Word coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

### طروبارية القديس إفدوكيمس (بالحن الرابع)

انّ الذي دعاك من الارض الى المنازل الابدية ايها القديس المغبوط. قد حفظ جسدك بعد الموت سالماً من البلى. فانك قضيت حياتك بالعفاف وطهارة السيرة. ولم تدنس جسدك البتة. فتشفع الآن بدالة الى المسيح في خلاصنا.

### **Troparion of St. Eudokimos (Tone Four)**

The One that hath called thee from the earth to Heaven to dwell now preserveth thy body uncorrupted after thy death, O saintly Eudokimos; for in living modestly and chastely, O blest one, thou didst keep thy flesh free of all stain and defilement; with boldness, therefore, pray unto Christ that we may all be saved.

## Troperia of the Saint

*قنداق عيد التجلي (بالحن السابع)*

تجلّيت ايها المسيح الإله على الجبل، وحسبما وسع تلاميذك شاهدوا مجدك. حتّى عندما يعاينونك مصلوباً، يفطنوا أن الآمك طوعاً باختيارك. ويكرزوا للعالم أنك أنت بالحقيقة شعاع الآب.

### **Kontakion of the Transfiguration (Tone Seven)**

Thou wast transfigured on the mount, and thy Disciples, in so far as they were able, beheld thy glory, O Christ our God: so that, when they should see thee crucified, they would remember that thy suffering was voluntary, and could declare to all the world that thou art truly the effulgent Splendor of the Father.

### **الرسالة للأحد السادس بعد العنصرة**

### **Epistle for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Thou, O Lord, wilt preserve us and keep us from this generation!*

*Save me, O Lord, for the godly man hath*

*أنت يا رب تحفظنا وتسئرننا من هذا الجيل!*

*خلصني يا رب فإن البار قد فني!*

disappeared!

**The Reading is from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (12:6-14).**

Brethren, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophecy in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, and serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

**فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى أهل رومية (14:12-6).**

يا إخوة إذ لنا مواهب مختلفة باختلاف النعمة المعطاة لنا فمن وهب النبوة فليتنبأ بحسب النسبة إلى الإيمان\* ومن وهب الخدمة فليلازم الخدمة والمعلم التعليم\* والواعظ الوعظ والمتصدق البسطة والمدبر الاجتهاد والراحم البشاشة\* ولتكن المحبة بلا رياء كونوا ماقنين للشر وملتصقين بالخير\* محبين بعضكم بعضاً حباً أخوياً. مبادرين بعضكم بعضاً بالإكرام\* غير متكاسلين في الاجتهاد حارين بالروح عابدين للرب\* فرحين في الرجاء صابرين في الضيق مواظبين على الصلاة\* مؤاسين القديسين في احتياجاتهم عاكفين على ضيافة الغرباء\* باركوا الذين يضطهدونكم باركوا ولا تلعنوا.

## الإنجيل للأحد السادس من متى

### Gospel for the Sixth Sunday of Matthew

**The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (9:1-8).**

At that time, Jesus got into a boat, crossed over and came to His own city. And behold, they brought to Him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Take heart, My son; your sins are forgiven.” And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.” But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—He then said to the paralytic—“Rise, take up your bed and go home.” And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid,

**فصل شريف من بشارة القديس متى الإنجيلي البشير, التلميذ (9:1-8). الظاهر**

في ذلك الزمان دخل يسوع السفينة واجتاز وجاء إلى مدينته\* فإذا بمخلع ملقى على سرير قدموه إليه\* فلما رأى يسوع إيمانهم قال للمخلع ثق يا بُني مغفورة لك خطاياك\* قال قوم من الكتبة في أنفسهم هذا يجذف\* فعلم يسوع أفكارهم فقال لماذا تفكرون الشر في قلوبكم\* ما الأيسر أن يقال مغفورة لك خطاياك أم أن يقال قم فامش\* ولكن كي تعلموا أن ابن البشر له سلطان على الأرض أن يعفو الخطايا. (حينئذ قال للمخلع) قم حمل سريرك واذهب إلى بيتك\* فقام ومضى إلى بيته\* فلما نظروا الجموع تعجبوا ومجدوا الله الذي أعطى الناس سلطاناً كهذا.

and they glorified God, Who had given such authority to men.

## ❖ Church Announcements

- ❖ **2016 Clergy Symposium Talks**: you can find the talks from the Clergy Symposium by Metropolitan Herotheos at [http://www.ancientfaith.com/specials/2016\\_clergy\\_symposium](http://www.ancientfaith.com/specials/2016_clergy_symposium)
- ❖ **Community Picnic is this Sunday**: We will have a community picnic on July 31<sup>st</sup> after Liturgy at Edworthy Park. Bring a dish to share or meat to BBQ at the park. Bring games for the children. Let us have a fun day as one family.
- ❖ **The Dormition Fast**: starts August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 15<sup>th</sup>. There will be a Paraklesis service every day at 7 PM. This is a very strict fast. We fast from meat, poultry, cheese and cheese products, eggs etc. **During this Fast we go to confession**. Watch on YouTube: “Be the Bee” #25 on “Fasting from more than food” episode.
- ❖ **Community Pot Luck and Games on August 14th**: to celebrate the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, we will have a pot luck luncheon on Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup> after Liturgy. Please bring a dish to share and join in the fun and games.
- ❖ **Feast of the Transfiguration**: Will be celebrated on August 5<sup>th</sup> with Orthros and the Divine Liturgy starting at 6 PM.
- ❖ **Sponsoring Families from Syria**: Our Antiochian Orthodox Churches in Montreal can help us bring our families from Syria, please see Father for more information.
- ❖ **Sunday School Registration**: Registration for Sunday School will be in August. It is \$20 per child. Please, see Mary Basmajian or Khouryia. We will email you the registration form with next week’s bulletin.
- ❖ **Wednesday Vespers and Bible Study**: starting in September, we will go back to every Wednesday Vespers followed by Bible study.
- ❖ **Friday Family Nights**: Starting in September we will go back to having family nights on the First and the third Fridays of the month. We will have Vespers at 7 PM followed by fun evening activities for the entire church family.
- ❖ **Orthodox Young Professionals Conference 2016**: The Conference will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, from August 18-21, 2016. All Orthodox Young Professionals visit: [www.Oypc2016.com](http://www.Oypc2016.com)

- ❖ **Eastside Christian Academy**: this Christian school is located at 1320 Abbeydale Drive SE. All families are welcome to apply. They are willing to provide free scholarship to new Syrian families. You have to provide your own transportation. For more information please call 403/569-1003 or visit [www.eastsidechristianacademy.ca](http://www.eastsidechristianacademy.ca)
- ❖ **Annual Cedar Festival**: August 5-7<sup>th</sup> at the Maronite church. Free admission.
- ❖ **Orthodox Women's Retreat**: from Friday September 16 to Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Fr. Michael Gillis is the retreat master. The topic is: "Seeing the World as an Icon". Contact Ghada Ziadeh 403-240-2549 [ziadehe@telus.net](mailto:ziadehe@telus.net). I encourage our ladies to make every effort to attend this retreat. It will be spiritually beneficial. Participants travel from all over North America to attend and it is here in our own city! Don't miss this opportunity to pray and learn about your faith with your sisters in Christ.
- ❖ **Giving back to God**: Our church depends on your generous giving back to God for all His blessings in your life. **Please, give generously and regularly and God will bless you back a 100 times.** Make sure you support your church even during the summer, the bills don't stop during the summer. **Give a percentage of your income.** Write your name on the envelope for a receipt.
- ❖ **Blessing of your home**: If your home has not been blessed this year, please make an appointment with Fr. George Dahdouh to bless your home.
- ❖ **Missing Sunday Liturgy**: Attending Sunday Liturgy should be part of our regular life as a family, we should not miss church unless we are really sick. Make attending church every Sunday an important part of your family life. **The family that worships together, stays together.**
- ❖ **In an Emergency**: If you go to the hospital or have a scheduled surgery, please call Fr. Dahdouh at 403/993-7945 anytime day or night 24 hours 7 days a week.
- ❖ **Attention all members**: Please, sign up to offer the Holy Bread for your good health and for the health of your family. Choose a Sunday and see one of the ladies officers. Also, we should sponsor coffee hour after Liturgy, **keep it light.** Every family is asked to pick up a Sunday.

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**The Transfiguration of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (August 6)**



At one point in His earthly ministry, Our Lord asked His disciples, Who do men say that the Son of man is (Matt. 16:13)? The disciples gave various answers: John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets. Then He said to them, But who do you say that I am (Matt. 16:15)? Simon Peter replied, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 16:16). Shortly after this confession of faith, Jesus went up a high mountain (according to Church Tradition, Mt. Tabor) to pray, taking with Him Peter, James and John. And as He was praying, the appearance of His countenance was altered, and His raiment became dazzling white. And behold, two men talked with Him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His departure, which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with Him were heavy with sleep, and when they wakened they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. And as the men were parting from Him, Peter said to Jesus, Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah not knowing what he said. As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, My Beloved; listen to Him! And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen (Luke 9:29-36). In the Old Testament, the presence of light and cloud often signified the Divine Presence: Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel (Ex. 24:15-17). Likewise, on Mt. Tabor the cloud signified the Divine Presence the God-Man Jesus Christ and the Theophany here was accompanied by a bright radiance.

Both Moses and Elijah had beheld the presence of God, as the Readings at the Vespers of the Feast point out, and thus were appropriate witnesses on Mt. Tabor to Christ's divinity. In addition, as Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, how appropriate it was for those who par excellence represented the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) to be present.

The Lord took His three closest disciples (Peter, James and John) with Him on the mountain for, although God sometimes reveals Himself to sinners in quite unexpected ways, it is usually those who have followed Him long and faithfully who are privileged to enter into the joy of the Transfiguration of the Master.

The bright radiance and shining of the face is also a characteristic of those closest to God. Such was the case of Moses, who spoke to God face to face: When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tables of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. And when Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them.... And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, the people of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone; and Moses would put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with Him (Ex. 34:29-35). In more recent times this phenomenon was especially noted in the case of St. Seraphim of Sarov whose face shone like the brightest sun according to contemporary reports [Conversation with Motovilov].

In like manner, we all have the opportunity to be transfigured in our lives and to acquire a close relationship with God. So, too, we all have the opportunity to manifest the visible signs of those closest to God. In any case, as St. Paul tells us, when we die our bodies will be transformed (transfigured, as it were) and we will take on spiritual, radiant bodies. This aspect is clearly seen in the Transfiguration of Our Lord.

### **Troparion (Tone 7)**

Thou wast transfigured on the Mount, O Christ God, revealing Thy glory to Thy disciples as far as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting light shine upon us sinner! Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Giver of Light, glory to Thee!

### **Kontakion (Tone 7)**

On the mountain wast Thou transfigured, O Christ God, and Thy disciples beheld Thy glory as far as they could see it; so that when they would behold Thee crucified, they would understand that Thy suffering was voluntary, and would proclaim to the world that Thou art truly the Radiance of the Father!

## **Fasting and Feasting: Balanced Diets, Balanced Souls**



By Richard McCombs

*This article originally appeared in AGAIN Vol. 28 No.1, Spring 2006.*

The fruitfulness of our fasting depends on our mind and on our heart. Without the spirit of fasting, our external asceticism is barren soil. If we fast for the wrong reasons or in the wrong spirit, it can leave us worse off.

However, when quickened by the right spirit, this soil yields a rich harvest.

Let us consider four aspects of the spirit of fasting. The chief of these is understanding the goal, and constantly intending and concentrating on that goal. The second is understanding the spiritual sickness of which we hope to be cured. The third is vigilant guarding of the heart against the traps that menace the faster. The sinful self resists its death, and does its utmost to corrupt our fasting, in order to make our last state worse than our first. The fourth and final aspect is an applied understanding of how the practice of fasting is part of a larger plan, and how it cooperates with other practices, most notably with feasting, its complement.

### **The Goal of Fasting**

The goal of fasting is simple. We fast so that we may better love, know, reveal, and enjoy God. We yearn, or at least intend, to do all of these things fully, but we also fall short. We fast to fulfill this intention. We fast to affirm God. Our affirmation of God is not yet that perfect “yes” we desire it to be. But fasting is a sapling “yes” striving for fruition. We must always bear in mind this affirmation at the heart of fasting, lest we be seduced by the widespread caricature of Christianity as a religion of “no,” of negation and negativity practiced by sullen enemies of joy. Admittedly, there is negation in the practice of fasting. But this negation serves the affirmation of God, the greatest good and the fountain of all joy. Moreover, as we shall see, the ascetic denial of created goods is complemented in Orthodoxy by their affirmation in feasting.

The affirmation at the heart of fasting is not a secret that emerges only when all fasting is over. Rather, it permeates the whole range of the activities of fasting. St. Paul writes, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if there *is* any virtue and if there *is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8). This teaching is one of the great spiritual laws. It bids us focus on God and on positive qualities like beauty and goodness, which manifest Him. The basis

of this law is that everyone tends to become whatever he habitually thinks on. We imitate that on which we meditate. The subject of our attention draws us into itself.

It is crucial that even in fasting our focus be on the perfect good at which we aim, and not on the evils and partial goods that we deny. If our attention is fixed on the things that we deny, then our fast is in vain.

Those evils and finite goods can steal our heart even as we renounce them, and mold our minds into images of themselves. We must also not focus on the act of denial with all its strain and hardship, for that focus would assimilate us into gloomy negation. As much as possible, the conscious affirmation of God as the goal must inform our fasting, so that we may realize the image of God in ourselves.

We need affirmation in fasting because we cannot live without joy. Jesus bade us to anoint our heads when we fast. Surely He didn't intend for us to only seem to be happy. He meant for us to actually be happy, to be anointed with joy. If we do not find this joy of fasting, we may seek substitutions or compensations. We certainly will seek joy when we have none. This striving for lost joy can dangerously pervert the power of fasting. At its worst, this perversion is a demonic delight in our supposed power, which we try to express by fasting. This demonic delight is the seven more deadly spirits who replace the less malign demon of intemperance, when the house of the soul is swept clean by fasting but left empty of joy. We must abstain from proud delight in our fasting. But if we hang on doggedly to our regimen, and the only perceptible result of our abstaining is that we suffer, then we will have still not progressed towards our goal. Our suffering by itself cannot attach us to the dispenser of joy.

“But what if my fasting is not joyful? Asking me to enjoy my fast is absurd, since I can't in my present state enjoy God by a simple act of the will. And if I could, then perhaps I would not need to fast at all.” I hear this questioning voice in myself, and the Scripture answers with the word “hope.” Hope is the joyful expectation of the promises of God. We can experience this joyful expectation anywhere, including while we fast and store up treasure for ourselves in heaven. This is not to say that when we fast we earn salvation. But by fasting we do contribute to it, and are thereby well placed to hope. If we believe in the promises of God, and in our God-given power to work out our salvation with God, then we can experience joy as we cooperate with Him. To the degree that we believe, and work, we will experience the joy of hope. We should also remember that there are other sources of joy in fasting. There is the peace that one feels when his passions and desires are quieted. And there is also the humble delight in the acquisition of new freedom.

### **The Spiritual Disease Which Fasting Helps Cure**

Now that we see that fasting is primarily affirmative, we may turn to its negative aspect. The purpose of its denials is to free us from our bondage to finite things, which detract from our love of God. The Fathers called this freedom *apatheia*, which may be translated as “detachment.” This detachment is the immediate goal of fasting. Through detachment, with the clutter cleared, we can find deeper connection to God. From what do we free ourselves? From what do we detach? In essence, we free ourselves from qualities of the

soul that have become harmful. The following way of categorizing the things from which fasting can free us is just one among many possible ways.

**(1) Inordinate desire for finite, created things.** We desire earthly goods as if they were God, as if they were the source of our best happiness. We must stop desiring them thus, and desire them for what they are, and only to the degree that is compatible with seeking first the Kingdom of God.

**(2) Inordinate fear of finite, created things.** We fear earthly things as if they included the worst evils that could happen to us. We must instead fear loss of God most, and only then earthly evils, to the extent that such fear is compatible with religious fear.

**(3) Definition of oneself primarily by relations to finite, created things, or one's place in the world.** We tend to define ourselves by our friends, families, jobs, abilities, and accomplishments. Instead we must define ourselves first as beings made in the image of God, intended to enjoy perfect fellowship with Him, and second as beings with relations to other creatures and created things.

**(4) Delusion concerning one's power over finite, created things, and delight in this delusional power.** We tend to overrate our power and accomplishments, and to forget that whatever power we have comes from God, and any success from that God-given power. Moreover, we desire to enjoy this delusional power. But we must learn to see ourselves as powerful only in God, and not to desire to see ourselves otherwise.

### **Guarding the Heart against the Subtle Enemies of Fasting**

As we seek through fasting to free ourselves from these vices, the vices fight back. Pride is an especially devious opponent, and, this side of perfection, we cannot hope to be free of delusions suggested by pride. We must, however, do our best to know ourselves; for the path to perfection is partly a study of the self and its tricks. Let us consider the role of self-deception in the following snares.

**(1) The denial of the value of finite things.** It is a serious error to hate created goods, or think that they are spiritually worthless. Christianity always affirms that finite, relative things have an important value. If this were not so, then there could have been neither an Incarnation nor icons, and we could not have been made in the image of God. Moreover, since this devaluation is a deep error contrary to human nature, we cannot sincerely believe it. It is a lie that we may tell ourselves, a self-deception. And a lie to oneself always has its cost, and can cause various illnesses in the soul. The root of this lie may be simply ignorant overzealousness. But it may represent an attempt to lighten the burden of fasting by a simplistic extremism. It is harder to give up valuable goods than worthless dross. And so we lie to ourselves to prepare to renounce what we really value. Or, having renounced some good, we may bitterly resent its loss, and lie to cover up that loss and its pain.

**(2) Halfheartedness.** Despite the relative value of things, we must nonetheless be prepared to give them up completely. We may have to lose the world to gain God. If we live in constant anxiety that we will be called on to renounce this or that forever, then we are halfhearted. If we fast merely to get a little free of the world so as to enjoy it better, as a worldly wise man might fast so as to enjoy his epicurean feast all the

more, then we are double-minded. If we attempt to bargain with God, or to appease Him as if He were an indulgent parent, or to trick Him as though He were an absent-minded ruler, then we are lukewarm fasters. Let us beware of deceiving ourselves with these shallow stratagems.

**(3) Pride.** Fasting is difficult. And pride is the most obvious means of making fasting easier. If I make my success in fasting a matter of pride, then I can surely improve in abstention from bodily pleasures. But I will have cast out one demon only to be beset by seven more deadly ones. For the delight in my illusory power to prevail on my own in the spiritual warfare is a far worse evil than the base addiction to physical pleasure that it conquers.

Since this pride in our success in fasting can mask itself as a legitimate delight in accomplishment, it proves to be a formidable foe. Let us therefore distinguish three different bases for delight in spiritual success, only some of which are godly. The first basis for delight is pleasing God. If we reasonably believe that what we are doing is pleasing to God, then we may delight in this greatest of all approvals: Well done, good and faithful servant. A second basis for delight is impressing our fellows. If impressing our fellows gives us pleasure because we reasonably esteem their ability to evaluate us—as we should esteem our confessors—then this pleasure is perhaps at least innocuous. But if we define ourselves by this esteem, and not by our relation to God, and if we seek this esteem so as to carve out for ourselves seats of honor within the world or the Church, then our delight in success has become prideful.

A final basis for delight in success in fasting despises all other human opinion and basks alone, not in the approval of God, but in self-congratulation, as if the demonically proud self were God. Since this sort of pride does not make a display for other people, and may even hide its feats, it can easily be mistaken for humility, both by others and by the self-deceived faster himself. One remedy to this self-deception is to remember that we fast precisely because of our weakness, because we cannot make ourselves happy by our own efforts. We have no sure hold on the goods of the world, and so look elsewhere, to God, for succor. Hence, to turn success in fasting into a reason for boasting is comically to misread the sign of our utter weakness. One must laugh at this absurdity in oneself, for such laughter is a strong aid in putting down the stealthy insurrection of pride.

**(4) Resentment, which we may understand as aggravated pride.** You may be familiar with the following sort of resentment. A man who is not helped in good time, and as he wishes, may eventually reach a perverse frame of mind in which he will decline what seems to him a late offer of assistance. He feels injured, he thinks he has been denied help that was due to him. And he wishes to punish, with the sight of his avoidable suffering, the man who tardily offers help. Indeed, the resentful man wishes to prove his superiority to the tardy helper by his continuing and self-afflicted suffering, by his willingness to suffer in the cause of justice. The man at the pool, who surprisingly would not answer Jesus that he wished to be healed, was perhaps on the road to this sort of resentment. For a man may also resent God for the evil in

the world, and God's apparent indifference to it. Let us beware of wishing, with Ivan in *The Brothers Karamazov*, to "return our ticket."

The ways in which self-deception can pervert fasting can seem to rob the spiritual life of all peace and joy. Here is where we must recall the greater law of fasting, that our main focus is to be on God, our goal. This focus itself will protect us from deception, and reveal us to ourselves, so great is the power of the knowledge of God. But we must also reserve regular times for self-examination aided and enlightened by spiritual reading. Moreover, we need spiritual counselors or confessors, who can help us to see ourselves as we are.

### **The Relation of Fasting to Feasting within Orthodox Spiritual Practice**

Fasting and detachment are incomplete, and must be complemented by feasting and reattachment. Reattachment is the lived reaffirmation of the finite created goods that we have renounced. For those goods are gifts of God, not to be despised, and symbols of Him, in which we must rejoice as in our God. Only with this reattachment does virtue become complete. With fasting and detachment, we realize that we have no claim on or right to finite goods, that our hold on them is so precarious that at any time we may die, and that even the whole world may fall back into nonexistence, if God does not maintain it. If we learn this in our very bones, then we are ready for feasting and reattachment. In reattachment, we find ourselves able to wonder at the world, which has lost for us its appearance of obviousness and of being our property. Surprise replaces the commonplace. We are astonished at the world, wonder at it, delight in it as a gift, contemplate it as a symbol of God, understand it as an occasion for joyful gratitude toward its Maker.

Though in the Orthodox calendar fasting and feasting are not simultaneous, but follow one another, ideally detachment and reattachment should coexist as conditions of soul. The soul should always be in readiness to lose or renounce any finite good, or the whole world—with pain and sorrow, yes, but without disproportionate disturbance. And the soul should also preserve always a readiness instantly to delight in any finite good as a gift of God and symbol of Him. In the midst of the greatest joy, the balanced soul remembers that it will die and lose this world. And in the midst of all loss and renunciation, that soul likewise delights in whatever finite good remains at hand. Such is the flexibility of soul for which we strive in the strictures of fasting, and in the expansions of feasting.

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# 16 Quotes that Show Us Life from a Different Perspective

WRITTEN BY ANGEL CHERNOFF

1. Happiness escapes from those who refuse to see the good in what they have. When life gives you every reason to be negative, think positive. Let go of what you think your life is supposed to be like right now and sincerely appreciate it for everything that it is.
2. The richest person isn't the one who has the most, but the one who needs the least. Wealth is a mindset. Want less and appreciate more today. Be thankful for your life. For your health, your family, your friends, and your home. Many people don't have these things. (*Marc and I discuss this in more detail in the "Simplicity" chapter of [1,000 Little Things Happy, Successful People Do Differently.](#)*)
3. It takes courage to grow and become who you really are. Don't fear change. You may lose something good, but you may also gain something great.
4. Most of your fears are much bigger in your mind than they are in reality. You'll see this for yourself as soon as you face them.
5. If you're lucky enough to have two good options, always go with the one that scares you the most, because that's the one that is going to help you grow.
6. Don't stress about the closed doors behind you. New doors are opening every moment and you will see them if you keep stepping forward. And as you're stepping, also keep in mind that we often waste too much of today by worrying about tomorrow. [Just be present.](#) Tomorrow will reveal itself exactly as it should.
7. Every difficult situation can be an excuse for poor performance or an opportunity for excellence, depending on the perspective you choose.
8. Even when it's tough, wear a smile anyway. Smiling doesn't always mean you are happy, sometimes it simply means you are strong. And YOU ARE.
9. Growth is painful. Change is painful. But in the end, nothing is as painful as staying stuck somewhere you do not belong. It's always better to be exhausted from meaningful work than to be tired of doing nothing.
10. Appreciate the gift of being able to work hard for what you want most. And remember that nothing is really "work" unless you tell yourself that you would rather be doing something else.
11. Do what you have to do, but leave space too. Be flexible. Don't overbook your life with rigid plans. Sometimes great moments happen unplanned and big regrets happen by not reaching exactly what was planned.

12. Instead of getting angry over the words of others, choose to listen, be mindful, and grow stronger one way or another, because of them. *(Marc and I build mindful communication rituals with our students in the “Love and Relationships” module of [Getting Back to Happy](#).)*
13. Life doesn't always give you the people you want, it gives you the people you need... to learn, to grow, and to fall in love.
14. The strongest among us aren't those who show strength you can see, but those who have won incredible inner battles you know nothing about. So be kind. You can't always see people's pain, but they can always feel your kindness. Being kind to people is a peaceful way to live, and a beautiful legacy to leave behind.
15. Three things ultimately define you: Your patience when you have nothing, your attitude when you have everything, and who you help whenever you are able.
16. Be humble. Be teachable. The world is bigger than your view of the world. There's always room for a new idea, a new step, a new perspective... [a new beginning](#).

Your turn...