



St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church

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"An Orthodox Presence in Northeastern Summit County"
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Important This Week—Nativity Fast All Week

NO Adult Study

Saturday, 13Dec, 10AM, Divine Liturgy, Feast of St. Herman, 6PM Vigil

Sunday, 14Dec, 10AM Divine Liturgy

07Dec25

26th Sunday After Pentecost/11th Luke

There Are "RULES" and There Are "rules"

Today's Gospel account once again places the focus on what Israel has adopted a "Mosaic Law".

When God gave the commandments to Moses on Mount Horeb, there were ten. Later others appeared, and the final number (although disputed by some) is generally accepted as being 613.

Interestingly, when the young lawyer came to Jesus to ask, *What must I do to be saved?*, the answer included the Ten Commandments plus *Love your neighbor as yourself* (Lev 19:18), which is NOT included in the Hebrew "List of 613"!

But why THIS focus on rules at this time for this Gospel account? Let's break down the reasons.

1) *As He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.* There were 'rules' associated with those who had leprosy. Once declared "unclean" by a priest, the leper was to live "outside the camp" (away from others). They were to wear torn clothes and their hair was to be unkempt. While they were not banned from being in public, when others approached

they were to yell *Unclean! Unclean!* to warn others of their presence.

2) *They lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"* It can be assumed that the ten heard of the Lord's presence and went to seek Him out for the purpose of healing. Ergo their calling out to Him, and their using the name *Master* shows a level of faith.

3) The Lord does not go to them. He does not touch them physically. He simply heals them with His word. *Go, show yourselves to the priests.* For a leper to be re-integrated into society, just as his separation occurred at the diagnosis of a priest, so his declaration of being healed must also occur by the same means.

4) *And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.* Being riddled with the disease, the ten may have wondered, "Why go to the priests while we remain infected?" But as they walked, their healing came. One may also assume that as they were healed, they could sense the change. Although the main symptom being lesions on the skin, the disease

also affects the nervous system, numbness in extremities, muscle weakness, and ulceration. In short, those cured would have taken note of the change.

5) *One of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.*

You see, the nine knew that in order to be re-integrated into society, they required that certification of the priest. Without it, they must remain *outside the camp* (Lev 13:46). Their only hope to return to a 'normal' life was seeing the priest. This would re-admit them to worship in the Temple.

For the Samaritan, he didn't worship in Solomon's Temple, he worshipped in Samaria. His path to give thanks was not hindered by the human desire to be permitted to touch people again, and to pray as he had been taught to pray, according to 613 'laws'.

He to Whom they should have run to offer thanks counts to 11. And in this, a Samaritan is once again praised.

This Week's Prayer Requests

For Health—St. Herman's: Met. Joseph, Pat, Sandra, Richard, Sam, Judy, Mitchell, Joe, Christian, Al, Sam, Fr.Dn.Basil, Nikandra, Fr.Jerome, Nora & Bob, Lori, Bill
For the Departed: Patriarchs Maxim and Neofit, Metropolitans Theodosius

and Maximos, Archpriest Stephan, Popadia Marika, Matushka Illaria, Nun Theophania, Matushka Theodora, Stephen, Reader Charles, Betty Lou, Lainey Kay, Katherine, Jeanne, Margaret, Lenni, Deaconessa Nana

Weekly Statistics

Saturday	Vespers	29Nov	9 faithful	no record
Sunday	Divine Liturgy	30Nov	41faithful	18 views

In the News

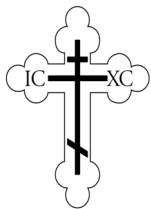
Videos of services can be found at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfAOKICLMmH_-FIDe8SoWOW

NO Adult Study and Enquirer's sessions this Thursday and Friday evenings. There IS Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning at 10AM for the Feast of St. Herman.

Next service on the schedule will be Saturday's Liturgy followed by Vigil that evening.

Yet More Truth

Just because you fit in, it doesn't mean you're in the right place.



If a man tries to overcome temptations without prayer and patient endurance, he will become more entangled in them instead of driving them away.

(St. Mark the Ascetic)

The Right to Life [Abbot Tryphon]

We are living in a period of history that has seen the cause of human rights take the forefront as never before. We champion the cause of equality under the law for minorities, and continue the struggle for equal rights and equal pay for women, but ignore the rights of the most vulnerable among us, the unborn. We'd rather kill the child in the womb than deprive ourselves of a lifestyle that would be hampered by a baby. Sexual gratification takes priority over the right to life of the unwanted child that is the result of our unchecked lust. We deny the humanity of the unborn, dismissing the reality of a life by deciding the child is not a real person until the moment they are born. We dispose of that which God has created, through the gift of our sexuality, preferring lustful gratification to chastity. The idea of saving oneself for the marriage bed has become as outdated as a Victrola.

We explain away the infanticide that is abortion, while our legal system can find a man guilty of murder should his attack on a pregnant woman result in the death of her unborn child. We think nothing of depriving another human being of life, while we pursue a life of unbridled pleasure for ourselves.

Saint Basil the Great said, "The woman who purposely destroys her unborn child is guilty of murder. The hair-splitting difference between formed and unformed makes no differ-

ence to us."

If we are to be a friend of God, we must keep the laws of God. An unborn child has been given the gift of life, even if under circumstances that are the result of our sin. That the child should forfeit her life for the convenience of selfish parents is unconscionable. The sin of sexual intercourse outside the marriage bed is compounded ten thousand times by the sin of abortion. The woman who would abort her child to avoid poverty will have placed her soul in a state of absolute poverty.

In an age when many question the morality of state sanctioned executions of criminals, or question the justification of war, it is beyond the pale that we would think we have the right to kill an unborn child. We must ask ourselves, as did Saint John Chrysostom, "Why do you sow where the field is eager to destroy the fruit? Where there are medicines of sterility? Where there is murder before birth? You do not even let a harlot remain only a harlot, but you make her a murderer as well. Indeed, it is something worse than murder and I do not know what to call it; for she does not kill what is formed but prevents its formation. What then? Do you condemn the gifts of God, and fight with His laws? What is a curse you seek as though it were a blessing. Do you make the anteroom of slaughter? Do you teach the women who are

given to you for the procreation of offspring to perpetuate killing?"

Let us stand firm for the rights of all people, especially for the most vulnerable, defenseless of them all, the unborn children. The Sixth Commandment tells us that we must not kill, and makes no distinction between the killing of another person, the killing of oneself (suicide), or the killing of the unborn. The Church has confessed from the beginning that each life is created by God, that human life is the supreme gift of the Creator. Human life is not given unconditionally, but is given under the condition that we will be responsible for preserving it. The testimony that God respects life above all else is contained in the words of the Gospel:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

In so far as God's perfection is beyond our understanding, by His grace and mercy we are called to theosis, the process of becoming like God. Theosis (deification) begins from the moment of our conception and continues until the very hour of our death. No one has the right to interfere in this process that was begun when God created us.

Saint Nicholas [*Metropolitan Tikhon, oca.org*]

Saint Nicholas is known the world over; in some ways, he is the archetypal saint. He is known for his love, for his generosity, for his care for the poor, for his zeal for the true faith of Jesus Christ.

But among Orthodox Christians, he is known above all for his wonders—his miracles, worked in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is why he is one of just a few saints whom we regularly call by the title wonderworker.

Indeed, look at any medieval life of Saint Nicholas and this will become immediately apparent: they are filled with stories of miracles worked during the saint's life and after his repose.

For example, there exists a medieval Russian manuscript life of Saint Nicholas that is lavishly illustrated. Running to 255 manuscript pages (that is, the equivalent of over 500 pages in a modern book), with 448 illustrations, this life is an unparalleled testimony to the love of the Orthodox Christian people for Saint Nicholas. And almost the entire text of the life, and most of its major illustrations, are connected with Saint Nicholas' miracles.

Likewise, the hymns for the feast of Saint Nicholas are filled with references to his wonderworking power and our hope that he would assist us with this great gift of miracles that he has received from God.

But for us modern-day people, all of this can seem a bit embarrassing, a bit over the top, a bit medieval, a bit superstitious. We often retreat from talk of wonderworking saints and icons and relics; we may want to convince ourselves that we see things in a more refined and spiritual manner.

After all, counting on Saint Nicholas to help us with this or that problem, this or that illness, can seem superficially worldly. More than that, we know better than our medieval forefathers—we have doctors for sicknesses, social services for our poor, and a whole bevy of self-improvement techniques and therapies for our own shortcomings.

And it is true that we have all of those things, and for the most part, we are grateful to God for them. We are glad we have modern medicine; we are happy to have some sort of social safety net; we are glad to find wisdom for living wherever it may be found, always rejoicing in what is good and true and beautiful.

And yet, with all that said, we should affirm that to believe in Saint Nicholas' wonderworking power, to celebrate him as a wonderworker—this is not to embrace superstition, but rather to embrace some of the most fundamental truths of the Gospel, some of the most fundamental truths of the world.

First, belief in miracles is basically a belief that God is a living, active God, who is constantly engaged with his creation out of love, in accordance with the mysterious workings of his providence. Creation is not purely mechanistic, raw material that we can manipulate according to certain rules for certain outcomes. Creation is the product of God's love, and one of the means by which he reaches out to us in love.

And so, when we speak of Saint Nicholas' power to work wonders, we are really affirming God's sovereignty over his creation, sovereignty that he, in his love, has chosen to exercise in, through, and together with his saints. Second, when we celebrate Saint Nicholas as a wonderworker, and when we actually approach him in prayer, asking for his intercessions in our trials and sicknesses and difficulties, we are acknowledging our reliance on the Lord. 'Without me ye can do nothing,' teaches Jesus our Master and God.

Yes, we have modern medicine and services and psychology, but we still acknowledge that good outcomes are not based on human artifice alone: in everything we rely on divine grace and acknowledge that God's will be done. God can work through doctors and he can work through Saint Nicholas, and indeed, he can work through both at the same time. But reliance on worldly intervention alone can mislead us; reliance on the prayers of the saints, on the other hand, always points us back to God, from whom comes every good and perfect gift.

Third, by celebrating Saint Nicholas as wonderworker, we are reminded never to lose hope. However great the achievements of science, technology, politics, economics, and the like may be, we all know that there are situations that seem to lie beyond human intervention. Medical emergencies, chronic illnesses, relationships of every kind, family and financial circumstances, natural disasters, political and geopolitical crises: in all of these areas we sometimes exhaust our human options.

But Saint Nicholas reminds us that, with God, the options are never exhausted.

None of this is to say that, even as we celebrate Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, we can be assured of his wonders in any given circumstance. As I stated previously, our God is a living, active God who acts out of his mysterious providence: he knows everything about us, and everything we need, far better than we know ourselves.

But we know that, if we need a miracle, God can provide that miracle. And we know that he often chooses to do so through the prayers of his saints, especially Saint Nicholas, in whom the Lord delights and whom the Lord has chosen to glorify as his friend and holy one.

And so, on this feast day of Saint Nicholas, I encourage everyone to turn to our great patron as a wonderworker, to celebrate him as one whom God has appointed to offer solutions that go beyond the merely mortal, beyond the merely human.

Amid all the troubles and difficulties of our life, we should avail ourselves of every virtuous and God-honored solution that lies in our power, but more than that, we should trust in God's providence and earnestly seek the prayers of his saints. Whether or not Saint Nicholas works a miracle for us, whenever we turn to him in prayer, we will surely grow closer to him, and, through him, to Christ.

In his love for mankind, Christ our God has made Saint Nicholas great: not just for the Middle Ages, not as a pious symbol, but as a living presence, a saint who is always with the people of God, praying for us, loving us, communicating to us the living and active love of the God whom he serves.

And so, on this great feast day, we offer Saint Nicholas our love and veneration, and to the one God in Trinity we send up all glory, honor, and adoration, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

We welcome you to our humble church, and we pray that your experience here will be spiritually rewarding, calling you back to pray with us at our next scheduled service.

St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church is established with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH of New York, and is one of approximately 30 parishes or missions that are all part of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada and Australia, Bulgarian Patriarchate.

Our worship is exclusively in English, and we use “contemporary” English translations of liturgical texts wherever possible. Singing is congregational. The Divine Liturgy is literally “the work of the people”, and as such your presence and participation in the service are essential parts of our worship. The worship of others here present is diminished when you are absent or unable to participate.

Participation in the Eucharist is important to us, and as such we ask you to recognize that it is limited to Orthodox Christians who have prepared for receiving the very Body and Blood of our Lord. Preparation includes fasting from the previous evening and recent confession. If you are not known to our priest, please let him know as you approach that you are Orthodox and prepared to receive! Please do not be offended if the priest so questions your approach—this is important, truly “our Life”!

Troparion for the Day: (Tone 1) *When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure Body, You arose on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life: ‘Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your Kingdom! Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!’*

Troparion/Forefathers: (Tone 2) *Through faith You justified the Forefathers, betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles. These saints exult in glory, for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit: she who bore You without seed. So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!*

Glorify to the Father....

Troparion to Saint Herman: *O blessed Father Herman of Alaska,/ north-star of Christ’s holy Church,/ the light of your holy life and great deeds/ guides those who follow the Orthodox way./ Together we lift high the Holy Cross/ you planted firmly in America./ Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ,/ singing His holy Resurrection.*

Now and ever....

Kontakion of the Day: (Tone 1) *As God, You arose from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Yourself. Human nature praises You as God, for death has vanished! Adam exults, O Master! Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to You: ‘You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!’*

Epistle: Eph 5:9-19

Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

Monthly Financial Tracker

Nov Total Income	\$7106
Nov Total Expenses	\$2480
Nov Net Income (Loss)	\$4626

Web Tracker

Web Searches	526	interacts/28 days
Blog Site Views	103727	Total Views
Web Site Views	19466	Total Views
Facebook Views	3955	views/28 days

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**CURRENT WEEK
HIGHLIGHTED**

December 2025											
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday					
25th Sunday 30 10th Luke T7 Divine Liturgy 10AM Eph 4:1-6 Luke 12:10-17	1 1Tim 1:1-7 Luke 10:37-44	2 1Tim 1:8-14 Luke 10:45-48	3 Grt Martyr Barbara Gal 3:23-29 Mark 6:24-34	4 Grt Martyr Barbara Gal 3:23-29 Mark 6:24-34	5 1Tim 4:4-8,16 Luke 20:19-26	6 St. Nicholas Divine Liturgy 10AM Vigil/Conf 6PM Heb 13:17-21 Luke 6:17-23					
26th Sunday 7 11th Luke T1 Divine Liturgy 10AM Eph 5:9-19 Luke 17:12-19	8 1Tim 5:1-10 Luke 20:27-44	9 Conception of Theotokos Gal 4:22-31 Luke 8:16-21	10 2Thes 2:1-12 Mark 8:30-34	11 1Tim 6:17-21 Luke 21:28-33	12 St. Spyridon Heb 13:17-21 Luke 6:17-23	13 St. Herman Divine Liturgy 10AM Vigil/Conf 6PM Gal 5:22-6:2 Luke 13:18-29					
27th Sunday 14 Holy Forefathers T2 Divine Liturgy 10AM Col 3:4-11 Luke 14:16-24	15 2Tim 2:20-26 Mark 8:11-21	16 2Tim 3:16-4:4 Mark 8:22-26	17 1Tim 1:18-20;2:8-15 Mark 10:11-16	18 Titus 1:5-2:1 Mark 9:10-16	19 Titus 1:15-2:10 Mark 9:33-41	20 Saturday Before Nativity NO VIGIL Gal 3:8-12 Luke 13:18-29					
Sun Bef Nativity 21 T3 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 11:9-10,17-23,32-40; Mat 1:1-25	22 Heb 3:5-11, 17-19 Mark 9:42-10:1	23 Nativity Vespers 6PM Heb 4:1-13 Mark 10:2-12	24 Eve of Nativity 10AM Royal Hours AllNight Vigil/Lit 1130P Heb 1:1-12 Luke 2:1-20	25 Nativity of our Lord and Savior Gal 4:4-7 Mat 2:1-12	26 Synaxis Holy Theotokos Heb 2:11-18 Mat 2:13-23	27 Sat Aft Nativity 1st Mrtyr Stephen Vespers 6PM Acts 6:8-15, 7:1-5,47-60; Mat 21:33-42					
Sun Aft Nativity 28 Divine Liturgy 10AM Gal 1:11-19 Mat 2:13-23	1000 Holy Innocents T4 Heb 8:7-13 Mark 10:46-52	29 Heb 9:8-10, 15-23 Mark 11:11-23	30 Leave of Nativity Moleben 6PM Col 2:8-12 Luke 2:20-21,40-52	31 Circumcision St Basil Col 2:8-12 Luke 2:20-21,40-52	1 Heb 11:8, 11-16 Mark 12:1-12	2 Vespers 6PM 1Tim 3:14-4:5 Mat 3:1-11					