



THE Veil

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
ST. MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

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MEMORY ETERNAL: THE CHARLIE I KNEW

NATHAN W.

Editor's Note: Our nation has been shaken by the recent assassination of political activist Charlie Kirk. Whether you agreed with his politics or not, in part or in whole, his death is certainly one of, if not the most significant instances of political violence in our generation. The Sunday following his murder, I reminded the congregation in no uncertain terms that, as many people would be in mourning, charity for the dead and the guarding of our tongues should be our approach. Our calling as Christians in the face of death is to offer prayer and a good word (the meaning of the word "eulogy") on behalf of the departed.

I received significant positive feedback from many in the community for this message. One of our parishioners, Nathan W., knew Charlie Kirk personally. I asked him to consider offering a good word on behalf of his friend, so that we could see that while strangers can rush to vilify or glorify a public figure, a real person with real human virtues, known to people within our own community, had his life cut short. St. Paul says, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." (Rom. 12:15). Rejoicing in the good things of life comes easy. Mourning does not. This is an opportunity to do the latter, better.

--Fr. David

“ **Understanding that when human connection is lost, the violence that took his life becomes far easier to justify.** ”

If you have only heard out-of-context clips or listened to his detractors, you probably never knew the real Charlie Kirk. I would like to take a moment to share a little about the Charlie that I knew. The man who inspired my faith. The man who gave me my first opportunity to work in my chosen field. The man who went to work every day with a smile. The man who deeply loved God, his family, and his country. The man who I was honored to call a friend.

After working in politics for a decade, I can say without a doubt that Charlie was one of the kindest people I have met in this field. And he never stopped advocating for open and honest conversation on hard topics — understanding that when human connection is lost, the violence that took his life becomes far easier to justify.

His witness inspired my faith that led me to Orthodoxy. His love of American ideals, including a fearless defense of free speech, inspired my career. And his deep devotion to his wife and two young children inspired thousands of young Americans to start their own families.

The Charlie I knew could see potential in anyone and gave them chances to prove themselves. I met him as a freshman in college where he made a personal connection with me and gave me my first professional opportunity within his organization. **(Cont'd on p. 6)**



Saint Mary
ORTHODOX CHURCH

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God Grant You Many Years!

Don't see your name? Join us on Realm and fill out your profile. If you include your birthday and nameday, you'll see them here.

BIRTHDAYS

Andrew B.
Andrea B.
Mihai B.
Lily C.
Nick D.
Liviu D.
Cassia E.
Joseph J.
Isa K.
Jason L.
Alexandra L.
Michelle L.

Dorina M.
Tom P.
Seraphina S.
Luke R.
Claudia S.
Stephanie T.
Matt T.
August V.
Chris V.
Elaine P.

NAMESDAYS

Oct. 6 — St. Thomas the Apostle
Oct. 9 — St. Tikhon of Moscow
Oct. 11 — St. Kenneth of Kilkenny
Oct. 18 — St. Luke the Apostle
Oct. 23 — St. James, Brother of the Lord
Oct. 29 — St. Anastasia the Roman

ANNIVERSARIES

Joseph & Margaret J.
Jim & Ioana M.



REGISTER FOR FALL 2025 CATECHISM CLASSES

Sept 13–Nov 15 @ 3pm–4:30pm, every week on Saturdays

This Fall, we are offering a course to help catechumen articulate the history, purpose, value, and meaning of the Eastern Orthodox Church's dogma and doctrine as outlined in the Nicene Creed. Upon finishing this course, catechumen will be well-prepared for reception into the Orthodox Church.



SCAN TO REGISTER

or find the Event on Realm



www.praythenewstoday.com

Don't just read the news. Pray it.



We deliver the top news stories without partisan bias and offer up each one to God, all in less than 15 minutes a day.

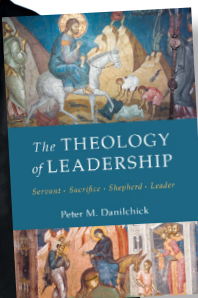
It's prayer, not politics—promised.



New release from St. Vladimir's Seminary Press from our own Proto-

The Theology of Leadership

Servant • Sacrifice • Shepherd • Leader



In a world awash with leadership theories, workshops, and self-help formulas, why do so many leaders still falter under pressure? The Theology of Leadership offers a decisive answer: true leadership begins not with personality traits or management techniques, but with spiritual transformation. Drawing deeply from the riches of Orthodox Christian theology, Rev. Dn. Peter M. Danilchick presents a bold and refreshing vision of leadership grounded in obedience, integrity, service, sacrifice, and shepherding.

Purchase at tinyurl.com/theology-of-leadership



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	1 PROTECTION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD 7am-8am Divine Liturgy 7pm-7:40pm Vespers 7:45pm-9pm-Financial Peace University	2	3 3pm-4pm Philokalia Book Study Connect DC Conference Oct. 3-5	4 10am-12pm Baptism: Tingstrom 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism I: The Faith (online only) 5-6pm Vespers @ Connect DC
5 9am-11:30am Matins & Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Relics of St. Olga 12pm-1pm: Church School Connect DC Conf.	6 ST. INNOCENT OF ALASKA 7am-8am Divine Liturgy 7pm-8pm Council of Ministries	7	8 7pm-7:40pm Vespers 7:45pm-9pm-Financial Peace University	9 GLORIFICATION OF ST. TIKHON	10 3pm-4pm Philokalia Book Study	11 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism I: The Faith 5pm-6pm Great Vespers @ St. Luke OCA McLean 6pm - St. Mary Annual Dinner Dance
12 9am-11:30am Matins & Divine Liturgy 12pm-1pm Church School	13	14 ST. PARASCHIVA OF TASI 7am-8am Divine Liturgy 12pm-2pm Orthodox Clergy Council	15 7pm-7:40pm Vespers 7:45pm-9pm-Financial Peace University	16	17 3pm-4pm Philokalia Book Study 6:30pm-8pm Women's Bible Study	18 ST. LUKE 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism I: The Faith (online only)
19 9am-11:30am Matins & Divine Liturgy 12pm-1pm Church School 6pm-8pm Men's Fellowship	20	21	22 7pm-7:40pm Vespers 7:45pm-9pm-Financial Peace University	23 ST. JAMES, BROTHER OF THE LORD 7am-8:30am Divine Liturgy of St. James	24 3pm-4pm Philokalia Book Study	25 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism I: The Faith 5pm-6pm Great Vespers
26 ST. DEMETRIUS 9am-11:30am Matins & Divine Liturgy 12pm-1pm Church School 12pm-1pm OCMC Missions Visit: Jesse and Juanita Brandow 6pm-7pm Vespers	27 ST. OLGA OF ALASKA 7am-8am Divine Liturgy	28 7pm-8pm Festal Vespers	29 ST. ANASTASIA 7pm-7:40pm Vespers 7:45pm-9pm-Financial Peace University	30	31 ST. JOHN OF CHICAGO 3pm-4pm Philokalia Book Study	1 MEMORIAL SATURDAY 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism I: The Faith (online only)
DOXACON Oct. 31 - Nov. 1						

Visit stmaryorthodox.org/calendar for the most updated event listings.

Partnering for Protection: Safety Training and Walk-Through

IOANA M. | PARISHIONER

National Preparedness Month is observed every September across the United States. It is an annual campaign led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to raise awareness about the importance of being prepared for disasters and emergencies. The goal is to encourage individuals, families, communities, faith-based organizations, and businesses to take proactive steps to ensure their safety and well-being.

In observance of National Preparedness Month, our parish had the blessing of hosting the Fairfax County Police Department for a Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (C.R.A.S.E.) Preparedness Training and a safety walk-through of our church grounds.

Last month, the officer walked us through best practices for responding to a potential active shooter situation. He emphasized the nationally recognized guidance of “Avoid, Deny, Defend”—with running and escaping always being the first and safest option. We discussed how to remain calm under stress, how to iden-

tify potential threats, and how to safely assist others in an emergency.

Participants were encouraged to always stay aware of their surroundings, know their exits, and be ready to follow directions from church leaders or first responders. This training gave our parish family practical knowledge and confidence to respond effectively, should we ever face such a crisis.

In addition to the training, a Fairfax County officer conducted a safety walk-through of our church grounds. Officer Goldman noted several important improvements we can make to enhance the security of our church:

- **Better Lighting:** Well-lit entrances, parking areas, and walkways deter suspicious activity and help everyone feel safe during evening services and events.
- **Security Cameras:** Installing cameras provides monitoring and recording that can help prevent incidents and support law enforcement if needed.

- **Door Locking:** Locking all side doors after 10 AM on Sundays, so that everyone enters through the front entrance.
- **Door Numbers:** All exterior doors should have clearly marked numbers at the top center of the door.
- **Security Presence:** Having security (security guard, police officers) during services
- **Window Security:** Installing mirrored window film on classroom windows, door windows, and any other appropriate areas to enhance privacy and security.
- **Other Safety Measures:** The officer recommended small but important steps, such as reinforcing doors, improving signage, and designating safe areas for emergencies.

We are grateful for his expertise and guidance, which will help us build a safer and more welcoming environment for worship and fellowship. ✕

Fireside Chat Recap: Tax-Wise Strategies for Charitable Giving

ILEANA C. | PARISHIONER

On September 28, 2025, Lori Jacobson joined me for a fireside chat during Fellowship Hour to discuss how parishioners can use tax and estate planning methods to be more tax efficient in their charitable giving to St. Mary's or another charity. By being more tax efficient, parishioners can save money and thus have the opportunity to be even more generous. Lori has over 20 years of experience as an Enrolled Agent as well as expertise as a Certified Financial Planner®, Certified Financial Counselor™, and Intuit QuickBooks® Certified ProAdvisor.

Regardless of your age, you can use

several giving strategies to save money: (1) take advantage of provisions starting in 2026 that allow non-itemizers to deduct charitable contributions up to \$1,000 if single and up to \$2,000 if married; (2) donate appreciated stock; or (3) set up a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) (e.g., with Vanguard, Fidelity, or Schwab) so you can more easily “bunch” charitable contributions to itemize every other year while still being able to send funds to charities in years that you take the standard deduction. You can also set up a Charitable Gift Annuity, or alternatively set up a specialized charitable trust, such as a Charitable Remainder Trust or a

Charitable Lead Trust, to donate to St. Mary's from your assets.

Additional tax breaks for charitable contributions are offered to those currently in retirement. If you are over 70 ½ years old, you can take tax-free Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). If you want to take advantage of the QCD option--and don't have an IRA but do have a Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) because you work for the Federal government--you would need to roll all or a portion of your TSP into a Rollover IRA, and then do the QCD from there. You can also pair years with large charitable

gifts with Roth conversions; it is often best to do this in early retirement before starting Social Security and/or Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs).

While you can leave a bequest for St. Mary's in your will, there are benefits to naming a charity like St. Mary's in your

traditional IRA or other retirement plan as a beneficiary or co-beneficiary, since charities do not pay taxes on IRA distributions they receive.

Lori is available for consultation if you have questions on giving strategies or would like to learn about the financial

planning services she offers. She can also provide the printed slide handouts for your reference--her work email address is lori@jacobsonconsultingllc.com. ✂

A Blessed Sunday Visit with Bishop Andrei

LACIE F. | COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

On Sunday, October 5th, 2025, our parish was deeply blessed by a visit from His Grace, Bishop Andrei, who celebrated a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with us. This special occasion was made even more meaningful by the presence of the holy relics of St. Olga

of Kwethluk, America's most recently canonized saint, as well as relics of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, St. Herman of Alaska, and St. George the Great-Martyr, Great Martyr Irene, St. Tikhon of Moscow and others. What a gift to venerate these saints together as a parish family!

During the service, Bishop Andrei

presented gramatas (formal ecclesiastical commendations) to Fr. David Subu and Protodeacon Peter Danilchik in recognition of their milestone anniversaries—25 years of priestly service for Fr. David and 50 years of diaconal service for Dn. Peter. We give thanks for their decades of faithful ministry to the Church.

Following the Liturgy, Stephen and Victoria S., along with their infant son Timothy, received a special blessing from Bishop Andrei—marking a beautiful moment of three generations joined in faith.

Finally, our community rejoiced as Fiona was received into the catechuminate, beginning her formal journey toward Holy Baptism.



Please keep her in your prayers as she prepares to be united to Christ and His Church.

We also look ahead with joy to our first liturgical observance of St. Olga of Alaska's feast day, to be celebrated later this month. On Monday, October 27, we will serve the Divine Liturgy for St. Olga's feast (7–8am). This marks the first time in the life of the Church that the newly approved troparion and kontakion for St. Olga will be sung, uniting the faithful across North America in honoring her as a new light of holiness on this continent. May her prayers inspire us toward humble service, compassion, and healing. ✂



The Charlie I knew picked me out of crowds and carried on conversations left off months prior. And even when my career advanced and I no longer worked for him directly, he encouraged me to keep up my fight.

The Charlie I knew encouraged young men and women to trust in God and give their lives to Christ. He never stopped reminding people that Christ loved them, died for them, and rose again to free them from death. And when I was an 18-year-old former atheist unsure about how to navigate the Christian world, he encouraged me to turn to scripture and simply trust in God. He shared that message with

everyone around him until the day he died.

The Charlie I knew gave a platform to every person to speak their mind, regardless of differences in worldview. And he respected every person who came to challenge his ideas, only asking that they respected his ability to challenge theirs.

The Charlie I knew was a kind man who saw the same value in everyone he met, holding a deep understanding that we are all made in the image and likeness of God. And he saw that value in an 18-year-old kid from Michigan who shared his passion for defending the America that he and I love.

I had to watch that man — who changed the course of my life for the better — gunned down at the age of 31 for challenging people on their worldview. And while I'm heartbroken over his loss, I cannot begin to imagine the pain of his wife, his three-year-old daughter, or his infant son. His children who now have to grow up without their father. And his wife who now has to grow old without the love of her life.

If you have not already done so, I would ask you to join me in praying for his widow, his children, and his soul. I hope that he's found comfort in the God he loved so deeply.

Memory eternal, Charlie. ✕

Meet OCMC Missionaries Jesse & Juanita

LACIE F. | COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Please join us on Sunday, October 26 during Fellowship Hour to meet Jesse & Juanita, Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) missionaries serving in Central America.

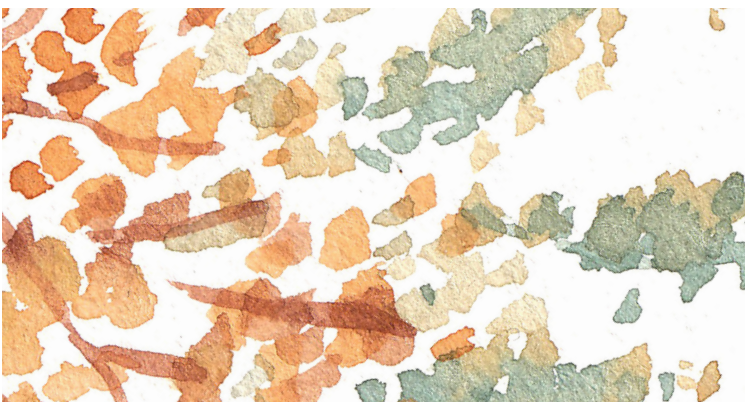
Jesse Brandow, originally from Michigan, holds a Master of Divinity degree from St. Vladimir's Seminary and has been engaged in full-time mission work since 2015. He teaches seminarians and lay catechists and now serves as Spanish-language Publications Coordinator for the Metropolis of Mexico.

Juanita Pascual, from Guatemala, previously worked as a community health worker in the Fr. Andrés Girón

Orthodox Medical Clinic in Aguacate. She entered medical school in 2017 and is currently completing her clinical rotations. Juanita hopes to use her medical training to serve Christ through compassionate care.

This is a wonderful chance for our parish to connect personally with missionaries in the field. Come hear their stories, ask questions, and learn how we can support their vital work in teaching, medical care, and

Spanish-language outreach. We look forward to welcoming you and growing together in faith and mission. (Biographic details and photos from <https://ocmc.org/missionaries/jesse-juanita/>) ✕



The Relevance of Relentless Ambition

ANNA C. | PHILOKALIST

If I read this paragraph to my non-believing family members and friends, they would laugh it off and consider terms such as “detachment” and “purification” as irrelevant to our age and fit only for medieval monks:

Yet slavery of the soul, despair, emp-

“Love for God begins with detachment from things human and visible. Purification of heart and intellect marks the intermediate stage, for through such purification the eye of the intellect is spiritually unveiled and we attain knowledge of the kingdom of heaven hidden within us (cf. Luk 17:21)”

— St. Nikitas Stithatos, *On the Inner Nature of Things and on the Purification of the Intellect: One Hundred Texts*

teness, and the secret longing for inner peace are especially relevant to us today, though the terms we use may sound different. Our attachment to praise, success, prestige, and material goods that drives us results in exhaustion, disappointment and a sense of emptiness. We can only achieve contentment and inner peace by detaching ourselves from this treadmill that keeps running in place.

In his book *From Strength to Strength: Finding Success, Happiness and Deep Purpose in the Second Half of Life*, Harvard social scientist Arthur C. Brooks demonstrates just how relevant the need for detachment and purification is for our age. He believes that most of us are “success

addicts”, relentlessly pursuing prestige, admiration, achievements, recognition, material goods and the like, at the expense of connections with family and friends and personal satisfaction.

On the basis of many interviews, he concludes that, despite our exhaustion and the high price we pay for success, we cannot give up its pursuit for fear of succumbing to a dull, boring, undistinguished life.

“...People who choose being special rather than happy are addicts,” he concludes. What workaholics truly crave is not work itself; it is success. They kill themselves working for money, power and prestige because they are forms of approval, power, applause and compliments. The success addict is never “successful enough.” The “high only lasts a day or two, and then it’s on to the next success hit.”

Nikitas Stithatos calls a life in pursuit of material things “carnal life:”

“The carnal mode of life is one wholly devoted to the pleasures and enjoyments of this present life and has nothing to do with the psychic and spiritual modes of life and does not even have any wish to acquire them.”

He describes those caught in vain, material pursuits as striving:

...only for what is visible and corruptible, on this account fighting among themselves and even sacrificing their lives for such things, avid for wealth, glory and the pleasures of the flesh, and regarding the lack of any of these things as a disaster.

Unless we detach ourselves from the carnal way of life, we will be unable to see the true essence of things in the light of God and unite with Him.

Both Stithatos and Brooks point to pride as the culprit. Brooks concludes, “so true-work, which is a source of meaning and purpose, becomes workaholism, which hurts our relationships. Success, the fruit of excellence, becomes an addiction. All because of pride.”

This addiction becomes especially painful as we age, he concludes. This is

the time when our abilities decline, our “wins” decrease and we are increasingly marginal to those we admire and emulate. Yet, unless we detach from the pursuit of “things human and visible,” and radically change our value compass, we will continue running in place on a treadmill.

This is when many of us realize that we have created a trap for ourselves, he continues, which makes it difficult to reframe ourselves in the second half of our life and find contentment...The point is that the symbols of your specialness have encrusted you like a ton of barnacles.

Many of us are fearful when trying to envision the future.

“A cousin of pride is fear,” Brooks observes—fear of normal life with its struggles, humiliations, boredom and obscurity.

So who are we and who will we become when deprived of titles, workplace routines, affiliations, recognition, habits, or continuing praise? Both Brooks and Stithatos point to detachment—chipping away of your attachments—as the most decisive step to finding your true self, as God intended it.

Stithatos goes beyond contentment to show the incomprehensive happiness of the union with God that your detachment has enabled, “Instead of longing for success and material goods, our souls are now consumed by ‘an irrepressible longing for the supernatural gifts of God and in a natural desire for union with God and for finding one’s abode in Him.... Where there is intense longing for God, noetic labour, and participation in the unapproachable light, there too the soul’s powers will be at peace, the intellect will be purified, and the Holy Trinity will dwell within us; for it is written, ‘He who loves Me will fulfill My teaching, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and take up Our abode in him’ (John 14 : 23).” ✠

Visit: <https://readingsinphilokalia.com> for the complete version and more!



Recycling Update

ELLEN R. | PARISHIONER

Our collection of aluminum cans continues! In September, we recycled four large bags and received \$24. I know it does not sound like a lot but if everyone contributes their empty cans, we could earn more. It is good for the environment, good for manufacturers who can reuse this aluminum and FREE money for us. Keep bringing in your cans and recycle them! ✕

Lost & Found

ELLEN R. | PARISHIONER

Our Lost and Found basket is almost full - please look and see if any of the items are your lost treasures. The items will be donated at the end of October. ✕



NEED A REALM
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LACIE@STMARYORTHODOX.ORG

Our parish uses Realm to share updates, announcements, giving, and to organize ministries and volunteers. Stay connected by regularly checking Realm Connect (on the app or browser) and join one of these great community groups:

Church School News: Get the latest updates on our children's programming.

Digital Scrapbook: Share photos of our church and prayer life, either at home or at the parish!

Psalter Prayer Group: Active during Nativity Fast and Great Lent, active members commit to twice praying through the Psalter individually.

Men's Fellowship: Orthodox Christian men and their friends meeting monthly for prayer, discussion, and fellowship.

Mischief of Mice (Service Support): Parishioners of all ages who serve God and the parish by preparing the church for services throughout the year.

Let's get connected. ✨



THE Veil

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Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, Orthodox Church in America (OCA)

Hierarchy: Archbishop NATHANIEL of Detroit | Parish Priest: V. Rev. Dr. Fr. David G. Subu
Deacons: Protodn. Peter Danilchick, Dn. Nicholas Dujmovic, Dn. Kenneth Liu | Choir Director & Head Chanter: Sdn. Nicholas Jones
Subdeacons: Eugene Huang, Nicholas Jones, Bogdan Maxim, Anthony Freude | Parish Council President: David Dill
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