

"The Fruit of the Spirit..." Galatians 5:22

The Fruit Basket

Love • Joy • Peace • Goodness • Kindness • Faith • Patience • Temperance • Gentleness

Volume V, Number 1 A friendly Orthodox Christian 'Zine JANUARY 2010

THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST



Troparion - Tone 1

When You, O Lord were baptized in the Jordan
The worship of the Trinity was made manifest
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You
And called You His beloved Son.
And the Spirit, in the form of a dove,
Confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ, our God, You have revealed Yourself
And have enlightened the world, glory to You!

THE FRUIT BASKET

Edited and published monthly
by An Orthodox Christian

The goal of this publication is to provide a friendly, light, Orthodox Christian 'Zine (a mini-magazine) that contains a blend of "something to exercise our minds, something to make us laugh, and something to make us meditate on spiritual matters." It is also a venue for sharing our insights and interests.

Articles or comments from our readers are welcome. We reserve the right to edit for suitability, clarity and space. Printing of items does not imply endorsement by the church or the priest or even the editor of this publication. Please call if you need more info.

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The Editor

Dear Folks,

The beginning of a new year always makes me think of resolutions and making changes. However, what I propose and challenge you with is not a resolution but just a small change that will do great good.

Many of you have illnesses, pain and other afflictions that keep you focusing daily on feeling better. But most people regardless of their situation can offer some comfort and encouragement to others. The passage 2Corinthians 1:3-7 addresses this subject. The footnote in the Orthodox Study Bible says: "The godly suffer, in part, so that having experienced God's comfort they in turn can comfort others." [*and be blessed thereby. Italics mine.*]

Over the next months there will be short articles suggesting different ways to encourage others and bring blessing to the giver as well as the receiver. My hope is that every reader of the *Fruit Basket* who is able will make it a point to encourage in some manner at least one person every day. Love in Christ, The Editor

MEDITATION FOR THE NEW YEAR

If we fill our hours with regrets of yesterday and with the worries of tomorrow, we have no today in which to be thankful.

Father, help me to see the beauty of today and to be thankful for what You have provided. Amen.

the *Bless Your Heart Each New Day* Calendar donated by Kathy Z, of Parma

PRAYER FOR NEW YEAR - 2003

By Mother Ana

**Abbess, Serbian Orthodox: Marcha Monastery,
Richfield Township, Ohio**

As we celebrate your birth, oh Lord, let us not forget who you are and what you do for us, your unworthy children. Look upon us and teach us to be and to do only what is most pleasing to you.

Lead us into your pastures of peace, show us how to love each other the way you love us.

Bless us all, we pray. Bless the old, the young, the helpless. Protect especially the children. Defend them and keep them safe from the pain and terror of the evil ones. Save and protect us all, the poor, homeless, sick and despairing ones who have nowhere to turn. Let us then turn to you, our only safe haven and salvation.

Turn not your face from us. We are small and weak. Only you are our strength and salvation. We humbly thank you for your long-suffering and never-ending love.

We pray that this holy season brings us health, joy and the peace that can come only from you.



Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

Theophany of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

Commemorated on January 6

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by St John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine “those who sat in darkness,” and “in the region of the shadow of death” (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of St Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and St Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. St John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but “to bury human sin by water,” to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify “the nature of water” and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our

faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Indivisible. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ” (Gal 3:27).

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday. ✨

<http://www.oca.org/FSlives.asp>

OUR BLESSED LORD JESUS SAYS

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going; and how can we know the way?”

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him

Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father...” ✨

(the Gospel of John, 14:9...KJV, to be continued in *your* Bible,)

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

Commemorated on January 24

SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE

Parable of the Publican & Pharisee

The **Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee** begins the Lenten Triodion the liturgical book used in the services of Great Lent. It is the Sunday after the Sunday of Zacchaeus and Sunday before Sunday of the Prodigal Son. This is the pre-Lenten start of the Easter cycle of worship in the Orthodox Church.

The focus this Sunday is on the Gospel of Luke 18:10-14, in which two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee an externally decent and righteous man of religion, and the other



was a publican, a sinful tax-collector who was cheating the people.

Though the Pharisee was genuinely righteous under the Law, he boasted before God and was condemned. The publican, although he was truly sinful, begged for mercy, received it, and was justified by God.

On this Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent, Orthodox Christians are to see that they have not the religious piety of the Pharisee, but the repentance of the publican. They are called to think about themselves, in the light of Christ's teaching, as they really are and to beg for mercy.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be exalted. (Luke 18:14)

Hymn Kontakion (Tone 4)

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee!

And learn humility from the Publican's tears!

Let us cry to our Savior,

Have mercy on us,

Only merciful One!



http://orthodoxwiki.org/Sunday_of_the_Publican_and_Pharisee

Commemorated on January 31

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

Parable of the Prodigal Son

The **Sunday of the Prodigal Son** is the second Sunday of pre-Lent, the weeks of preparation preceding Great Lent. It is the Sunday after the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee and Sunday before Meatfare Sunday. This pre-Lent is the start of the Easter cycle of worship in the Orthodox Church.

On this Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent, Orthodox Christians are read Christ's parable about God's loving forgiveness (Luke 15:11-24). This parable of God's forgiveness calls us to "come to ourselves" as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being "in a far country" far from the Father's house, and to make the journey of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that our heavenly Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only "arise and go," confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that "home" where we truly belong (Luke 15:11-24).

After the Polyeleion at Matins, we first hear the lenten hymn "By the Waters of Babylon." It will be sung for the next two Sundays before Lent begins, and it serves to reinforce the theme of exile in today's Gospel.

Hymn Kontakion (Tone 3)

I have recklessly forgotten Your glory, O Father;
And among sinners I have scattered the riches which You had given me.
Therefore, I cry to You like the Prodigal:
"I have sinned before You, O compassionate Father;
Receive me a penitent and make me as one of Your hired servants."



http://orthodoxwiki.org/Sunday_of_the_Prodigal_Son

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

Commemorated on February 7


SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

The **Sunday of the Last Judgment** or **Meatfare Sunday** is the third Sunday using the Lenten Triodion the liturgical book used in the services of Great Lent. It is the Sunday after the Sunday of the Prodigal Son and Sunday before Forgiveness Sunday. This is the third week of the pre-Lenten start of the Easter cycle of worship in the Orthodox Church.

Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11). This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice).


The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed.

As Father Alexander Schmemmann reminds us in his book **GREAT LENT** (Ch. 1:4), sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation. When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison. If we did such things for the least of Christ's brethren, then we also did them for Christ (Mt.25:40). If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ (Mt.25:45).

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent. 

THE LORD IS FAITHFUL TO YOU


I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart
and tell about the wonders you have worked.
God Most High, I will rejoice;
I will celebrate and sing because of you.

You rule forever, Lord, and you are on your throne,
ready for judgment.
You judge the world fairly
and treat all nations with justice.
The poor can run to you because
you are a fortress in times of trouble.
Everyone who honors your name can trust you,
because you are faithful to all who depend on you.
Psalm 9.1,2, 7-10 CEV  Submitted by BFS

QUIET WALKS WITH CHRIST: Meditations on Colossians by Fr. Vladimir Berzonsky

“...that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love” (Col. 2:2)

“Hearts be encouraged.” The term is *parakalein*. The noun, Paraclete, is used as an attribute of the Holy Spirit, as in the prayer: “Heavenly King, Comforter and Spirit of truth...” It means also, courageous. So when Jesus advises us not to lose heart, not to worry what we will say when brought to trial for our faith, he knows that the Holy Spirit will both comfort us and give us the courage which will replace our natural fear instinct. True Christians are always potential martyrs, ready to “give an account of the hope within.”

“Being knit together in love” is the basic attribute of a living Church. What distinguishes a Church from any organization, if it be not a shared love? Without love we are nothing. If our hearts are not united in a common affection, caring for each other and helping one another through every personal crisis and problem, we are like the tasteless salt turned to sand, good for nothing but to be thrown out (Mt. 5:13). It takes courage to love others; that’s why the Holy Spirit inspires us with the grace needed to fulfill the command of Christ, that we love one another. 

Submitted by Ann L.

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

New Insights by Rick Warren of *Purpose Driven Life*

People ask me, What is the purpose of life?

And I respond: In a nutshell, life is preparation for eternity. We were not made to last forever, and God wants us to be with Him in Heaven.

One day my heart is going to stop, and that will be the end of my body— but not the end of me. I may live 60 to 100 years on earth, but I am going to spend trillions of years in eternity. This is the warm-up act - the dress rehearsal. God wants us to practice on earth what we will do forever in eternity..

We were made by God and for God, and until you figure that out, life isn't going to make sense.

Life is a series of problems: Either you are in one now, you're just coming out of one, or you're getting ready to go into another one.

The reason for this is that God is more interested in your character than your comfort; God is more interested in making your life holy than He is in making your life happy.

We can be reasonably happy here on earth, but that's not the goal of life. The goal is to grow in character, in Christ likeness.

This past year has been the greatest year of my life but also the toughest, with my wife, Kay, getting cancer.

I used to think that life was hills and valleys - you go through a dark time, then you go to the mountaintop, back and forth.. I don't believe that anymore. I believe that it's kind of like two rails on a railroad track, and at all times you have something good and something bad in your life. No matter how good things are in your life, there is always something bad that needs to be worked on. And no matter how bad things are in your life, there is always something good you can thank God for.

You can focus on your purposes, or you can focus on your problems: If you focus on your problems, you're going into self-centeredness, which is 'my problem, my issues, my pain.' But one of the easiest ways to get rid of pain is to get your focus off yourself and onto God and others. We discovered quickly that in spite of the prayers of hundreds of thousands of people, God was not going to heal Kay or make it easy for her- It has been very difficult for her, and yet God has strengthened her character, given her a ministry of helping other people, given her a testimony, drawn her closer to Him and to people.

You have to learn to deal with both the good and the bad of life.. Actually, sometimes learning to deal with the good is harder. For instance, this past year, all of a sudden, when the book sold 15 million copies, it made me instantly very wealthy. It also brought a lot of notoriety that I had never had to deal with before. I don't think God gives you money or notoriety for your own ego or for you to live a life of ease.

So I began to ask God what He wanted me to do with this money, notoriety and influence. He gave me two different passages that helped me decide what to do, II Corinthians 9 and Psalm 72.

First, in spite of all the money coming in, we would not change our lifestyle one bit.. We made no major purchases. *Second*, about midway through last year, I stopped taking a salary from the church.

Third, we set up foundations to fund an initiative we call The Peace Plan to plant churches, equip leaders, assist the poor, care for the sick, and educate the next generation.

Fourth, I added up all that the church had paid me in the 24 years since I started the church, and I gave it all back. It was liberating to be able to serve God for free.

We need to ask ourselves: Am I going to live for possessions? Popularity? Am I going to be driven by pressures? Guilt? Bitterness? Materialism? Or am I going to be driven by God's purposes (for my life)?

When I get up in the morning, I sit on the side of my bed and say, God, if I don't get anything else done today, I want to know You more and love You better. God didn't put me on earth just to fulfill a to-do list. He's more interested in what I am than what I do. That's why we're called human beings, not human doings.

Submitted
by Augie

Happy moments—PRAISE GOD.

Difficult moments—SEEK GOD.

Quiet moments—WORSHIP GOD.

Painful moments—TRUST GOD.

Every moment— THANK GOD..

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

WORD SEARCH FOR January

H P R O P H E T M A L A C H I A V E A V H
A P P P Y N E E W I S Y E A R F H T T E Q
L L K U B N E K C T W H T M Y R S A N N Z
L T Z T B S J E E J N H Z L R U E N T E N
Y Z N T I L S M A P E T T L E R V T B R Y
N M G R L K I N H O B G N A G T K M N A H
R L A B A L I C P P H H H E G S R M W B T
N H L T I N W H A N N C H L R I R T L L O
P K I A T L A B Y N C T R T E T B N T E M
M N N S M N Y K D A L Y L Z G P C G H S I
G N V X Y R R G Z I T Y Z N O A C K E E T
Y R A U N A J S K Z R H P R B L H O R E
Z S K W V J L A Z L F Q Z R Y E R S D A L
V R U Q L V B G L W N X L M T H Z L O P T
D O C I B L I Z Z A R D P T H T A E S H S
X S M I M K M J L C H X K K E N N E I I O
L S R O R Y W Z J V W B B R T H A T U M P
P E S Y T C H N V W J R F F H O I J S V A
Z F H Y R S U T X T G C N G E J T L T J M
L N H T N O O M U K D K V T O T A X H N B
J O M W Z A G S C E K N L T L S T C E D G
B C B T T V X E Y I N W N R O M R G G R T
G S W T N T T I R R S E V R G F Y L R V K
X U G P H L P R S G H I V M I H T C E R H
Y M T S N O W M A N T C O Z A D R R A N X
N I C N P D F Y Z R Y S N N N T A R T Y N
D X X W G M R Z N T P D B H R K M B H P Z
Z A M G K M F Q K B F P Y R O G E R G T S
R M G N I N A G G O B O T W T J Y K M N P

Another year is dawning Dear Father, let it be,
in working or in waiting, another year with thee.

—F. R. Havergal

**Seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness,
and all these things will be added unto you.**

—Matt. 6:33 KJV

WORD SEARCH LIST FOR January

Apostle Timothy	Pharisee	Snowman
Basil the Great	Prophet Malachi	Synaxis
Blizzard	Publican	Theodosius the Great
Circumcision	Sleet	Theophany
Gregory the Theolo- gian	St Emilian	Tobogganing
Ice skating	St Gregory	Ven Euthymius
John Chrysostom	St Gregory	Venerable Seraphim
Martyr Tatiana	St John the Baptist	Zacchaeus
Maximus Confessor	St Nina	

SECRET MESSAGE

After you find and circle all of the words from the word list there is a secret message spelled out in the leftover letters.

Clue: The letters are in order, reading from left to right, and the message may continue down on the next line or lines.

BIBLE BRAIN WORKOUT FOR JANUARY

281. Who is the only person recorded as paying his fare?
282. Which king sent his cupbearer on a mission to a distant land?
283. Name the wicked man who slew his seventy brothers.
284. When were shepherds bidden to howl and cry and wallow in ashes?
285. Where do we read of a man named Rufus?
286. When did it rain so heavily at Jerusalem that the people trembled and could not stand out of doors?
287. What terrible nation had horses swifter than leopards?
288. Of which city is it recorded that its people burnt their children in fire as sacrifices to their gods?
289. Which king was assassinated in his own parlor?
290. Who wrote down a prophet's words "with ink" in a book?

Answers on page 19

*How did you score? A+ Bible Scholar 6 or more Correct ;
A Superior 5 +correct; B+ Pretty good 3+ correct: C Fair
2+ correct; Less than 2, an opportunity to make reading the
Bible daily a wonderful habit!*

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

Never criticize or condemn or it will all come back on you. Go easy on others; then they will do the same for you. Luke 6

LEAVE IT TO THE KIDS...

These have to be genuine...No adult is this creative!

JACK (age 3) was watching his Mom breast-feeding his new baby sister. After a while he asked:, “Mom, why have you got two? Is one for hot and one for cold?”

BRITTANY (age 4) had an earache and wanted a pain killer. She tried in vain to take the lid off the bottle. Seeing her frustration, her Mom explained it was a child-proof cap and she’d have to open it for her. Eyes wide with wonder, the little girl asked, “How does it know it’s me?”

TAMMY (age 4) was with her mother when they met an elderly, rather wrinkled woman her mother knew. Tammy looked at her for a while and then asked, “Why doesn’t your skin fit?”

Following is one sermon this mom will never forget:

This particular Sunday sermon began thusly: “Dear Lord,” the minister began, with arms extended toward heaven and a rapturous look on his upturned face. “Without you, we are but dust...” He would have continued but at that moment my very obedient daughter who was listening leaned over to me and asked quite audibly in her shrill little four-year-old girl voice, “Mom, what is butt dust?”

TIMMY (age 4) was walking along with his mother in downtown Cleveland near 9th Street. An elderly man with a back so bent over that he was facing the sidewalk approached and passed them. Timmy, quite fascinated, looked back and forth from the man and to the empty sidewalk, and turned to stare after him. As his embarrassed mother hurriedly pulled him away, he asked, “Mommy, what is that man looking for?”

JEFFY (age 5) was sitting in the doctor’s waiting room with his mother. An elderly man hobbled in on obviously painful legs. Jeffy studied him for a bit and then whispered to his mother, “ Mom, that man is limping on both legs!”

Never criticize or condemn or it will all come back on you. Go easy on others; then they will do the same for you. Luke 6

CRYPTOGRAM CHALLENGE FOR DECEMBER

The following message is written in code using regular letters. Your task is to figure out which real letters the code letters stand for. Start by writing the real letters (shown in the Cheat Chart below) above the code letters in the message. That should help you to figure out some of the words. When you discover another letter, write it above the code letters in the puzzle.

XES'G FR XQOZEKHPBRX QU VEKH
 ZJQCXHRS HRNRZG VEKH PXMQZR.
 VRPHO CPGRH GJRV DQCC EUURH
 QG GE GJRQH EDS EUUOIHQSB.

To make this more of a challenge cover up or have somebody cross out some or even all of the Cheat Chart!!!

CHEAT CHART--IT GIVES YOU SOME OF THE LETTERS.

<u>REAL LETTERS</u>	<u>c</u>	<u>e</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>w</u>
CODE LETTERS	Z	R	Q	U	S	H	O	D

Tougher Challenge for the Whiz Kids!

To make the puzzle even harder simply have someone cross out or cut from the page one or two of the clue letters. You can do the same with the easier puzzle above.

AS ACPTI XS ASTT CB FWS AJO FC
 YSEVSZFGCB GV AS ZCPTI ASSI CPF CBS
 MGZS VECQ CPELSTMSL SJZW OSJE.

S=e

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

Everybody Needs Encouragement from 52 Simple Ways to Encourage Others by C.E. Rollins

You may not be able to see the person's problem.
He may seem to be on top of the world.
She may appear to have it all or at least have all it takes.
He may look in perfect health.
She may exhibit great faith, great emotional strength, and great enthusiasm for life.
He may exude optimism and joy, faith and hope.
But, the truth is, everybody needs encouragement. And not just some of the time. All of the time!

INSTILL HOPE

Nobody has all of the confidence needed to grow to full potential...all the hope stimulated to face tomorrow...or all the resources required to further personal growth. No matter who you encounter, the person needs to hear the encouraging words that only you can say.

Don't limit your words of encouragement to persons you feel are down and out or at least lower on the emotional health totem pole than you are. Don't withhold your words and deeds of encouragement from someone because you feel he doesn't "need" it. He does.

Adopt the perspective that you are going to look for ways in which to encourage every person who crosses your path—in some way, with some word or deed, anticipating some positive result in that person's life and in your own.

RECEIVE HOPE

At the same time, be open to being encouraged. Let the words of encouragement you speak be heard by your own two ears. Be receptive to the words of encouragement you hear coming your way. Take them into your being and let them take root. The encouragement you mete out tends to come back to you in like measure. The more you receive encouragement, seek all the more to give it. Give great encouragement and be greatly encouraged. Encouragement can become a cycle in your life that generates joy, promotes wholeness, and gives strength—to others as well as to yourself.

Encourage someone today! You'll both be glad you did! 🌿

(see page 2 for the editor's comments on this subject.)

DRUGGED BY MY PARENTS

The following letter has appeared on the internet and has been viewed by many readers, so we decided to share it with you as well.

The other day, someone at a store in our town read that a Methamphetamine lab had been found in an old farmhouse in the adjoining county and he asked me a rhetorical question. "Why didn't we have a drug problem when you and I were growing up?"

I replied that I did have a drug problem when I was young: I was drug to church on Sunday morning. I was drug to church for weddings and funerals. I was drug to family reunions and community socials no matter the weather.

I was drug by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults. I was also drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card, did not speak with respect, spoke ill of the teacher or the preacher, or if I didn't put forth my best effort in everything that was asked of me.

I was drug to the kitchen sink to have my mouth washed out with soap if I uttered a profanity. I was drug out to pull weeds in mom's garden and flower beds and cockleburs out of dad's fields. I was drug to homes of family, friends, and neighbors to help out some poor soul who had no one to mow the yard, repair the clothesline, or chop some firewood, and, if my mother had ever known that I took a single dime as a tip of kindness, she would have drug me back to the woodshed.

Those drugs are still in my veins and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, or think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin: and, if today's children had this kind of drug problem, America would be a better place. God bless the parents who drugged us.



Submitted by Kathy B.



Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

Hundreds Gather to Protest Global Warming...



BIBLE BRAIN WORKOUT answers for January

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 281. Jonah 1:3 | 286. Ezra 10:9, 13 |
| 282. Neh.2:1-9 | 287. Hab . 1:6,8 |
| 283. Judg. 9:5, 56 | 288. 2 Kings 17:31 |
| 284. Jer. 25:34 | 289. Judg. 3:20-23 |
| 285. Rom. 16:13 | 290. Jer. 36:18 |

Reflections on Drinking

“Sometimes when I reflect back on all the wine I drink I feel shame. Then I look into the glass and think about the workers in the vineyards and all of their hopes and dreams. .. If I didn’t drink this wine, they might be out of work and their dreams would be shattered. Then I say to myself, “It is better that I drink this wine and let their dreams come true than be selfish and worry about my liver.”

~~~~~  
**“I feel sorry for people who don’t drink. When they wake up in the morning, that’s as good as they’re going to feel all day. “**

*~Frank Sinatra*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people.

~~~~~  
And saving the best for last, as explained by Cliff Clavin, of Cheers.

Cliff Clavin was explaining the Buffalo Theory to his buddy Norm.

” Well ya see, Norm, it’s like this... A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo.. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That’s why you always feel smarter after a few beers.”

Submitted by Kathy B.

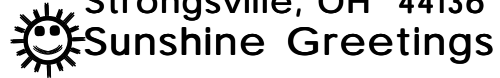


Happy New Year!
from
Precious Kaye
in a
Cocktail Glass.

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year

THE FRUIT BASKET

18893 Howe Road
Strongsville, OH 44136



from

St. Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral

CALENDAR for January 2010

- 1 Circumcision of Christ
- 5, 6 Blessing of Waters
- 6 Theophany of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ
- 17 Zacchaeus Sunday
- 24 Publican and Pharisee
- 31 Prodigal Son



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Thanks to Shirley Ostrander
HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?

