

Five Very Good Reasons to Attend Church Weekly

by Fr. Demetrios Kavadas: Reprinted from Orthodox Observer, July 1994, page 2

Church Attendance. Those two words must concern all Christians - especially those who come to worship frequently. How can we remain aloof to the terrible statistic that 80-90 percent of all the souls who are baptized in the Orthodox Church do not worship on Sunday morning! Sociologists today count an average of four in each household. If a parish has 200 homes "registered", then it has 800-1000 souls to feed spiritually. How many of these souls attend Liturgy on Sunday morning, and how often? The numbers become smaller, percentage-wise, as the number of households increases. A house of worship with a seating capacity of 500 is not filled every Sunday of the year. Furthermore, one wonders how many are not parish members and are considered "unchurched" by their own volition... Is it because of habit? Is it because the wish to "relax", sleep, golf, read the paper, go boating, work? Is it because they truly feel they do not need God or man to stay happy and healthy?

All the above have been real situations that turn into "second natures" and strictly speaking, press so many to say: "hey, that's my business! Leave me alone! I'm very happy the way I live! I don't have to go to Church to be a good Christian! I don't want to be a hypocrite!" Obviously, priests want people to go to Church. If they do, more souls will be nourished, money will come in, the better business the parish will have, the higher salaries will be given, etc., etc. Some, who attend once in awhile, listening to the above rationale, begin to slowly join their forces. The "easy way" is the "best way out". In all the above debates, one may easily get lost. For it is repeatedly written that people "get lost" without God. People become lonely without others to share, to serve, to smile together, to work together, to build together to even... suffer together!

Who then can debate the benefits of the energy created when we get together with God in Church? Here are some answers that our togetherness declares every Sunday morning in Church:

It is great to love life. Accept life as a precious gift and strive to make the most of it. Do not forget the Lord under any circumstances.

It is great to serve life. The most important thing in life is not what people can do for you, but what you can do for people. Lose yourself in a cause bigger than yourself. Serve God and humanity to the best of your ability.

It is great to be alive to the best in life. To be alive only to material possessions and goals is to live in the shallows. Launch out into the deep of each human soul in Church where the treasures are! Enter God's palace.

It is great to stand for something. Men and women of principle are the principal men and women. Character is the bedrock of true greatness. Do not allow the winds to bend you. Stand and be counted!

It is great to seek excellence. Aspire to excel in your chosen work. Adopt the creed of the maker of the immortal Stradivarius violins: "Perfection consists not of doing extraordinary things, but in doing ordinary things extraordinarily well." Church is the most extraordinary place on earth.

Come to Church next Sunday! We need you! Christ's powerful silence says: Everyone counts!

All bulletin submissions for August 2009 must be sent to cchamallas@gmail.com by Wednesday July 15th. It is the responsibility of each ministry to submit their announcements by this deadline; we encourage all ministries to be represented each month!