



## SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE ORTHODOX CHURCH

*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America*

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St. Benedict of Nursia  
Sunday of Forgiveness

Beloved in Christ,

At the end of the funeral service in the Orthodox Church, we say, “May their memory eternal.” In this short prayer we are asking not only that our loved ones be remembered here on earth (for if they are not remembered who would pray for them?), but also and more importantly, that God will remember them. To say “May their memory be eternal” is to ask God to grant them a place in paradise. In the Gospel of Luke, we find this conversation between Jesus and one crucified beside him, who said to Jesus, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (*Luke 23:42-43*).

With the words “memory eternal” we are asking on behalf of those who have gone before what the thief on the cross was asking for himself. This offering of prayer on behalf of the departed is not unusual in the tradition of the Church but in fact is practiced universally. Prayer for the departed has its expression in Scripture, in view of the hope of the resurrection. In the Book of Second Maccabees, after many had fallen in battle, we read the following:

On the next day, ... Judas and his men went to take up the bodies of the fallen and to bring them back to lie with their kinsmen in the sepulchres of their fathers. ... and they turned to prayer, beseeching that the sin which had been committed might be wholly blotted out ... He also took up a collection, man by man, to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver, and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this he acted very well and honorably, taking account of the resurrection. For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin. (*2 Maccabees 12:39-45*)

So we offer up our prayer for the departed, seeking to act “very well and honorably, taking account of the resurrection,” and because of our expectation that those who have fallen will rise again, we pray “that they might be delivered from their sin.”

It is with this intention in our minds and hearts that we have planned a **Wall of Eternal Memory** for the remembrance of our loved ones who have fallen asleep, which will be placed in the soon-to-be-renovated secondary vestibule (handicapped entrance). We envision a peaceful place where we can

“AND THE DISCIPLES WERE FIRST CALLED CHRISTIANS IN ANTIOCH” (ACTS 11:26)

honor those we love and remember them by name. Enclosed you will find a brochure with details about this endeavor and how you can participate in it, remembering your loved ones.

Because this momentous project in the life of St. Andrew's requires that we incur a significant initial expense, we are asking for your support well in advance of its actual installation, which is tentatively planned for the end of summer. If you choose to remember your loved ones with a memorial nameplate on the Wall of Eternal Memory, we encourage you to place your order sooner rather than later.

We pray you will perpetuate the memory of a loved one by donating a memorial nameplate. It is a small yet powerful way we say to our departed, "I love you." We light a candle and appeal to God with the words, "May their memory be eternal!"

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Herman Acker  
Pastor