

RAISING SAINTS

BRINGING YOUR CHILDREN CLOSER TO CHRIST



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Written by Rev. Fr. Ghevond Ajamian

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And Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19:14

PREFACE

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, wants children to come to Him. One who wants to inherit the kingdom of God is called to be like a child. So many of us as children dreamt of the day when we can grow up to be adults, yet when that day arrives and the chapter of childhood is complete, we long for the return of the times when we were children, worriless, care-free, full of hope, and living a life of innocence. As we become parents, we hope and do everything in our power to provide our children an easy life, filled with joy, love, support, and peace, guarding them from the dangers of the fallen, yet redeemed world we live in.

We, as parents, have the responsibility to teach our children how to navigate through life, make the right decisions, recognize good and

evil, and survive in difficult situations. We instill within them, how to interact with others, to think critically, to work hard, and to create a successful future. All these things are wonderful and praiseworthy, yet sometimes parents do not prioritize faith and bringing their children to Christ, not considering these to be powerful tools for navigating through life. But parents must also realize that salvation is the ultimate goal we must have for children and why God has blessed and entrusted parents with children.

There can be many reasons why parents do not put salvation at the top of their list for their children, but three of the main reasons are as follows:

- First, parents may believe it is not their responsibility to teach faith, giving that job to the Church or the local priest.
- Second, parents may be under the erroneous belief that faith should be left up to the child to decide on their own, allowing them to choose when they get older (a grave mistake).
- Third, parents may not feel it is important or urgent to teach faith, mainly because they themselves were never raised in faith or had a falling out with faith.

In Christian communities, faith is the foundation both for the child to receive his/her salvation and for the Church, the Body of Christ, to be built up. Healthy spiritual and moral upbringing is vital not only for a person or a family, but

for society in general. Children who are raised with good, Christian morals become shapers and leaders of society. In truth, limiting faith education as one of the responsibilities of the Body of Christ is unjust toward the child.

From the earliest times, it has been understood that the Christian education of children should be carried on chiefly within the home, within the family. Instruction given in Church schools and attendance of Church services are very important, but dependent, of course, on the family's cooperation and attitude. This function of the family (sending the children to Church school and bringing them to Church) is only supplementary, however, to the basic process of Christian education that goes on, day after day, within the home.¹

The Bible is filled with advice of raising children in the faith and under the shadow of the Lord:

“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

“All your sons will be taught of the Lord; and the well-being of your sons will be great.”

Isaiah 54:13

“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him.”

Proverbs 22:15

“For children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.”

2 Corinthians 12:14

Our liturgical prayers are also sprinkled with the truth that children are blessings of God given to a husband and wife. In the Armenian Church’s Prayer of Crowning, we pray, *“Bless, O Lord, also their fruitfulness in bearing children, toward an inheritance of a life of virtue, for the glory of your all-holy name...so that living in righteousness, holiness and the fear of God according to the pleasure of your beneficent will, they may see the children of their children and become your people and glorifiers of the name of your Holy Trinity.”*

However, attitudes towards our children’s salvation changed among parents. For example, in the days of St. John Chrysostom (347-407), the holy Patriarch of Constantinople spoke of how parents planned for their children’s futures, which were confined to professional success and prosperity, not thinking of spiritual formation, ethical refinement, or leading them to sainthood.²

The reality is that the road to salvation involves a life of sainthood. This might sound big and unattainable, yet that’s what it means to be a follower of Christ. To raise saints and bring children closer to Christ, parents and adults must undertake two primary tasks. First, parents must come to the truth that parenting is a long-term commitment and a long-term process.³ It is not something that happens once but takes decades

to achieve – a process that evolves and changes over time. Second, parents must know their own faith, otherwise it will be the blind leading the blind. Parents must become saints themselves, and grace will be showered on their children. Family life is a struggle, no matter what; but when we struggle with Christ, we reap rewards. The work of shepherding a family is relentless and tiresome, but when we understand our homes as domestic churches, we begin to see blessings even in the struggles.⁴

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Raising children to be followers of Christ begins long before a child is born. One of the very first decisions that parents make is deciding what name to give their child. A child's name possesses great power (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:23) and the decision process should not be taken lightly. It has become commonplace today to find exotic names or to choose a name of an ancestor in honor of them. There's nothing wrong with this, but a parent must keep in mind that a child's name should bear the name of someone or something that you wish them to be and imitate.

In America, we usually try to choose names that will be easy for others to say. Sometimes Armenian names are difficult to pronounce and, for that reason, we either choose simpler names or give them nicknames. Again, there is nothing

wrong with this, but parents should put a little bit more thought in choosing a child's name, rather than naming them after a famous person, because of uniqueness, a new fad, a grandfather or grandmother, or just to make them happy. Parents should consider naming their children after figures in the Bible, virtues, or saints who have lived in this world and have conquered it.

When a child hears and recognizes that their name means something, that child's personality is shaped.⁵ They begin to emulate and replicate that person for whom or virtue for that they are named after. For example, if a child is named Moses, Peter or Khatcheeg (diminutive of Khatchador "gift of the cross"), the child will naturally gravitate towards researching, learning, and feeling like Moses, Peter or the Holy Cross. This is emphasized in the Armenian culture with the phrase, *անունվդ ապրիս* (anoonovt abrees), roughly translated as, "May you live with your name," implying that the bearer of the name is encouraged to live up to and emulate the meaning of the name or the one after whom he or she is named.

However, if a random name is chosen because it "sounds good and is easy for Americans to say", we then are robbing that child of a spiritual formation that can transform and transfigure him and those around him.

HOME IS CHURCH AND CHURCH IS HOME

Years ago, I did a home blessing for a family with younger children. This family was not one who frequented the church, but two or three times a year they would come, light a candle, stay a little and then leave. During the home blessing, I burned incense, and the daughter of the family, approximately seven years old, smelled the aromatic incense and exclaimed, "It smells like church!" Truly, from the mouths of babes' true praise will be made (Matthew 21:16) and it made me realize, children associate with and recognize the Church and worship much more than we give them credit for.

It is unfortunate that not every family attends Church every Sunday, though we may wish it. However, parents and families can bring the evangelical spirit of the Church to their home and create an atmosphere such that when the child does attend the Church, they feel like they are at home and vice versa, when the child is at home, they feel like they are at Church. This is not difficult to do, but it does take dedication and a little bit of planning on the parents' part.

It is vital that the Church and the mission of the Church, namely the preaching of the Gospel, not remain in the four walls of the sanctuary, but extend outward to all places. Christ commands the apostles during the Great Commission to "*Go to all nations...teaching them all that I have taught you.*"⁶ This behooves us to bring Christ

everywhere we go, showing Christ and our faith in our speech, thoughts, and actions, especially in our homes and with our families.

CREATING A SPIRITUAL SPACE

We consecrate churches and set that space aside for spiritual and divine worship. Likewise, families should dedicate a certain section of their home for prayer and worship. This spiritual space can include icons, crosses, charcoal and incense, candles, prayer books, and other religious items. It does not necessarily need to be in the center of the house, but it should be somewhere that everyone can access it, preferably facing east. Keep in mind that just having a prayer corner, or a little chapel is meaningless if it is not used. It is important to frequent this place either on a weekly or daily basis.

Icons and crosses should not be limited to just this area of the house but should be placed throughout the home so that wherever a child may go, they can see Christ, the cross, and/or the saints participating in their daily life. Most definitely, the cross and a saint's (or Christ's) icon should be in the child's bedroom so that in times of fear or worry, the child can turn to them for help and guidance.

When a family gathers around the prayer corner, if there is a child old enough to hold the

burning incense, let them. Allowing them to hold the incense holder and walk through the house, will allow prayers to rise in all the rooms and corners of the home. Children should be explained at what points they should make the sign of the cross or to bow; and they should be taught to sing. Another simple, yet powerful thing to do is teach children the Lord's Prayer, the Jesus Prayer, and other simple prayers; for even the smallest of children can utter the sweet name of Jesus.

READING THE BIBLE AND THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

One of the greatest ways to spend time with a child is to read before bedtime. Many parents read books and stories that help educate and teach a child how to live in this world. Many stories teach moral lessons, showing courage, and teaching how to navigate friendships. There are no better stories than those found in the Bible and in the lives of the saints.

The Bible is the greatest teacher, not only of faith, but also of how we should live our lives. Teaching children with biblical stories helps give them a moral ground upon which they can build their lives and have a reference to go back to in the storms of life. Naturally, just reading stories from the Bible is not good enough. Like with any books we read to children, a discussion usually

follows. The same occurs when reading the Bible. We must be ready, willing, and able to speak about the Biblical stories and to teach the moral lessons to our children.

Children will have questions we may not know the answers to, and that is alright. It is better for a parent to say, "I do not know that answer, but I will look it up for you and tomorrow we will discuss it," or "Let's ask our priest about it and learn together," than to make up an answer (risking to be wrong) or not allow a child to ask questions at all and expand his/her faith.

Reading the lives of the saints is also an immense benefit to a child. The saints are humans who have gone through the same experiences we have endured and that our children may be feeling. The holy fathers and mothers of our Church set examples of how to live and how to use the biblical principles of our faith in our everyday lives. It is even more meaningful when a child, who bears the name of a saint, hears that saint's story. The child will feel a connection with that saint and then strive to live like the saint. Truly, there is no greater blessing for any parent than to have a child who is a saint.

WHAT AGE IS THE RIGHT AGE SUNDAY SCHOOL VS THE DIVINE LITURGY

As mentioned earlier, the bulk of Christian education must be done at home, but supplementary education must be done in the House of God. The Church, the Body of Christ, needs to be part of a child's life just as a child needs to be part of it. We unfortunately have come to believe that children do not belong in the Church at an early age, because they either do not understand, are bored, make noise, become distractions, are just too young, or won't sit for two hours. For these reasons, after children reach a certain age it is assumed that they belong in Sunday School and not in the Divine Liturgy, depriving them of the holy, precious, and life-giving Body and Blood of Christ.

Opinions about the matter of what age children should be introduced to the Church vary. Some parents think that children in the first several years are too young to understand what is happening in the Church, their attention span is too short, they fidget too much; and/or they are not interested. However, these opinions speak against Christian teachings and practical evidence.

There are psychological studies that establish that children could receive and react to many external influences not only after birth, but also in the womb. Impressions on children from the external world happen perpetually, impact their

soul, and form their personality.⁷

For this reason, children should be in the Church even before they are born. Mothers who are pregnant need to attend Church services regularly to help familiarize the sound of worship with the child in the womb. Even St. John the Baptist recognized the holiness of Christ's presence while in the womb (Luke 1:41-44).

The truth is that children belong in the Church, in the sanctuary, and in the Divine Liturgy. Anyone who thinks they do not belong there either has not grown up in the Church or does not understand the purpose of the Church. When the disciples prevented the little ones (most likely too little to walk) to approach the Lord, He became indignant (Mark 10:13-16), testifying that even Christ wants the little ones to come to Him.

Probably one of, if not the greatest, complaints made against children participating in the Divine Liturgy is that they make too much noise and are distractions to those who have come to pray. When Metropolitan Anthony Bloom of the Russian Orthodox Church was once asked what to do when children who come into the Church make too much noise, he responded, *"Do not worry, when you begin to pray, you will not hear the children anymore."*

In truth, children belong in the House of God, as Christ commanded them to come and not be hindered. According to Father Alexander Schmemmann, *"As a general rule, children like to be in church, and this instinctive attraction to and interest in church services is the foundation*

on which we must build our religious education. When parents worry that children will get tired because services are long, they usually subconsciously express their concern not for their children but for themselves. Children penetrate more easily than adults into the world of ritual, and liturgical symbolism. They feel and appreciate the 'atmosphere' of worship. 'Unless you turn and become like children' (Matthew 18:3) these words apply to the receptivity, the open mindedness, the naturalness which we lose when we grow out of childhood...Therefore, the first duty of parents and educators is to 'let the children come ... And do not hinder them ' (Matthew 19:14) from attending Church.

HOW TO BRING CHILDREN TO CHURCH

Be Consistent – Create a schedule. This may not mean attending Church every Sunday, but it does mean making a true effort to be in Church as often as possible and arriving on time. Coming late to Church teaches children that Church is not important. Let the children know your plans for the upcoming weekend so they know what to expect and how to prepare themselves, both with prayer and fasting in the morning. Naturally, little children should not be forced to fast, but making them aware that Sunday mornings are different is important, i.e., instead of having a big family breakfast with eggs, bacon, muffins, and orange

juice, your children can have toast and jelly or something else very simple.

Lead by Example – Children do as they see, which means they need to see us praying and wanting to attend Church. Not just reading the services but also sincerely praying to God from our hearts. Let them see you giving thanks to God and praying for others. Let them see and hear you praying in times of fear or trouble. What a blessing it is to have our children turn to God first in the midst of trouble.

Make Them Feel Involved – During the Divine Liturgy, guide your children to explore and be part of the service. Let them hold a candle or an icon and help them sing the responses of the people. It is alright if they walk around the sanctuary – it is their home and they should feel comfortable there. Other faithful should understand this and not be bothered by having a little child explore his or her faith.

Make a Prayer Box or Journal – If your children are older and able to write well, you can start a prayer journal which can be done at home and also at Church. A prayer journal is also a nice way to list the people or situations you need to pray for. For younger children, they can keep a “prayerbox, x” which can include photos of people or just their name; it can also hold little toys, for example, a tiny, plastic green soldier for our armed forces or a tiny plastic baby for a child who

might be ill. They can also keep a prayer journal, but with coloring pictures of prayers they ask of God. Every time they attend the Divine Liturgy, they can bring this journal and “pray” in it.

THE SIX VIRTUES

Along with attending and participating in the sacramental life of the Church, the life to sainthood involves other disciplines that need to be applied and practiced. Here it is appropriate to quote the saying, “Monkey see, monkey do,” that is to say, children repeat that which they see, no matter how small and insignificant we may think it is. When we attempt to teach our young children new tasks and skills, we demonstrate and explain. It is just as true when we teach and instill moral values and virtues. Without demonstrating and living these virtues ourselves, we cannot expect our children to do the same.

Before we discipline them, we must discipline ourselves to become Christ-like, by possessing virtues such as courage, humility, repentance, integrity, service, and thanksgiving. These six virtues are taught by Christ and must be cultivated within a child. When these virtues are planted, a child’s spiritual formation is on the right path.

COURAGE

One of the first virtues a child must learn is how to be courageous in life and in faith. Christ demonstrated courage in front of the Pharisees and religious leaders, unafraid of the consequences and willing to speak truth in the face of adversity.

To be courageous simply means not to be afraid. Many times in the Gospels, Christ speaks of this virtue and commands it to His disciples.⁸ In so doing, He follows the Old Testament example, *“The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?”* (Psalms 27:1). *The apostles were also utterly courageous, and counseled men to follow their example, “Be vigilant, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong”* (1 Cor 16.13).

The virtue of courage is expressed not only in times of persecution and suffering, but also in the face of ridicule and disdain. It is expressed as well, simply in the smallest, most common things of everyday life. Children are mocked and ridiculed in their school and among peers, but we must teach them how to be courageous in those times. They must be ready to stand up for themselves and others who are being picked on. In doing so, as Christ defended the defenseless, we too defend Christ.

It is important to teach children that the person with courage faces all things with strength and lives every day, in every little thing, with the power of Christ. Teaching children that Christ is always with them (Matthew 28:20), emboldens them and gives them the comfort that they are

not alone in those difficult situations.

In Christ's parable of the talents, the man with little, lost even the little that he had and was cast out into darkness because he failed to use his small gift through a lack of courage: "*and I was afraid and hid your talent in the ground*" (Matthew 25:25–30). To be "faithful in little" is a sign of great courage. The saints were exceptionally courageous in their lives and considered this virtue to be central in their spiritual life.

Children, therefore, must be taught courage at an early age and they must see it in their parents and the adults around them.

HUMILITY

Humility is the mother of all virtues. It counteracts pride, the cause of all sins, and emulates the life of Christ and the saints.

Humility does not mean disgrace or sorrow. It does not mean engaging in some sort of demeaning external behavior or lowering ourselves to be picked on or used by others. It does not mean considering oneself the most vile and loathsome of creatures. Christ Himself was humble and He did not do this. God Himself, according to the spiritual tradition of the Church, has perfect humility, and He certainly does not act in this way.

Genuine humility means seeing reality as it actually is in God. It means to know oneself and others as known by God. The humble lay aside all vanity and conceit in the service of the least

of God's creatures, and consider no good act as beneath one's dignity and honor. Humility is to know oneself to be, without the grace of God, dust, sinful, and dead.

God is humble because He cares about all His creature, particularly the birds in the air, the grass in the fields, the worst of sinners (cf. Matthew 6:25–30). Christ is humble because He associates with the lowly, becoming the slave of all by taking on Himself the sins of the world.

The exaltation of Jesus as a man depended entirely on His self-emptying humility. That is to say, true greatness, divine greatness, is the ability to be the least and to serve others. True humility for the sinful man is to know that indeed, according to one's own possibilities and gifts, each one is truly the first and greatest of sinners, knowing that one is not perfect (cf. 1 Timothy 1:15), for each one has sinned in his own way. The truly humble person is the one who, confessing his sins, is "*faithful over little,*" and doing so, is exalted by the Lord and is "*set over much.*" Only such a person will "*enter into the joy of his Master*" (Matthew 25:14–23, Luke 19:17).

Teaching children humility not only keeps them grounded in reality but also allows them to bear spiritual fruits. For, through humility, children recognize their own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of others. This behavior helps them recognize areas where they need to improve through more humility, faith, and prayer.

REPENTANCE

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 3:2

Repentance, also known as penance, is the sacrament by which an individual turns back to God and receives forgiveness. Very often, with our Western minds, we think penance or repentance must involve some kind of punishment or suffering – believing that God will love us again if we suffer. This cannot be further from the truth.

In the East, the Greek word for penance is *metanoia*, which means “the changing of one’s mind” and the Armenian word, *abashkharootyoon* means “turning back” (from the wrong direction). In both cases, Greek and Armenian, the sense carries an understanding of making amends, penance, of coming out of the wallows of our sorrow and changing what we think/do/live.

Teaching a child about repentance means teaching them to recognize their mistakes and imperfections and asking for forgiveness, by facing and recognizing them, and then improving their ways of life. It is difficult for children to apologize, just as it is difficult for adults too, but apologizing and repenting requires humility and courage to accept our wrongs. When our children recognize their mistakes, it is an opportunity to teach them how to change, so that they become better.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the adherence to moral and ethical principles, soundness in character, honesty, and the state of being whole, entire, and undiminished. In a nutshell, integrity is being true in face of opposition. Christ speaks about this in the Sermon on the Mount when He says, *“Let your yes be yes and your no be no”* (Matthew 5:37). People should not have to guess or be worried about whether you will do what you say you will do or question your promises.

As Christians, we are called to be salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13-16). Salt is something that gives flavor to meals, preserves foods, and even stings when put into a wound. As the salt of the earth, we are called to do all three things: to give flavor to this flavorless world, to preserve that which is good and holy, and to speak the truth even if it means people will disagree.

As we spoke earlier about being courageous, courage and integrity go hand in hand. Children must learn how to have integrity to the point where people see them, recognize who they are, and respect them. As Christian parents, we care that our children make the right choices and this is why integrity is so important. Ultimately, children are the mirrors of a family.

SERVICE

Children from a young age must be taught how to be helpful and serve others and in doing so,

they will learn to serve Christ. All too often, parents serve children, their needs, their wants, their demands - and this is a recipe for disaster. We've all seen this before when parents provide everything that the child wants, and once the child grows older, he becomes intolerant of circumstances that prevent him from having what he wants. They expect everyone to serve them, never experiencing disappointment or rejection. The word NO becomes a trigger for frustration. Naturally, no parent wants their child to be disappointed or rejected, but at the same time, no parent wants their child to be spoiled either. So, to teach them this without disappointing and rejecting them, the child must learn how to serve others with humility.

Christ said, "*The Son of Man has come to serve and not be served*" (Matthew 20:28) and Christ is the perfect example of a servant. God, in all His majesty and wonder, humbled Himself in order to serve His creation and, in turn, teach us how to serve one another. Children need to learn that service is an act of love, not a punishment. When a child understands service as punishment, he/she will grow to despise and avoid it.

A major part of our Christian faith is service. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus preaches parables of servants ministering to others and, in turn, their master. Children must be taught that when they serve one another, they are in turn serving Christ. This also teaches our children about stewardship, the idea of taking care of something that

does not belong to us but belongs to God. Such things include, but are not limited to, our bodies, our finances, our homes, our families, our church, and our planet.

THANKSGIVING

The spiritual person is the one who is thankful for everything. He is the one who receives everything with thanksgiving, and who knows that he has nothing except what he has received from God.

Children need to have thanksgiving and gratitude in all circumstances, in everything, and for everything. This thanksgiving is rooted in the firm conviction of God's merciful providence and care in all things, in the steadfast faith that *"everything works together for good with those who love God"* (Romans 8:28).

The spiritual teachers, especially Saint John Chrysostom, are very strict in this teaching. The spiritual man does not thank God only for what he considers to be good. Rather, he thanks God for everything, even for what appears to be bad, knowing that God's tender care is over all, and that the evil in this world — which is present — can itself be the vehicle for spiritual growth and salvation if rightly understood and overcome by the grace of God. God, in His infinite wisdom and divine providence, can take that which is evil and transform it into a blessing (cf. Genesis 50:15-21).

We must be careful that a child does not demonstrate the opposite of gratitude, which is bitterness and complaining; it is bemoaning

one's lot in life because of pride and greed. It is caused by the absence of humility in the Lord. When we are full of pride, we lack the sense of responsibility and believe that we are entitled to certain things. We are not thankful for our entitlements and, as such, we do not feel the need to be thankful. This sense of entitlement only grows the sin of pride and can only be cured with the virtue of humility.

Prayer is an important part of thanksgiving. A child must learn how to pray a prayer of thanksgiving and to thank God in everything and for everything. Such a prayer is the result of absolute trust in the Lord, who knows best what we need for our salvation and does all that He can within the evil conditions of the world to bring us to eternal life, peace, and joy. It is the product of believing. It is important to teach our children how to be thankful for the blessings they have, and to help them recognize what those blessings are. The best way to do this is to teach by our own example.

Helping our children understand and possess these six virtues, **Courage**, **Humility**, **Repentance**, **Integrity**, **Service**, and **Thanksgiving**, we help them become like CHRIST.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, bringing children to Christ is not a one-time event in their lives but a constant journey, which parents must guide with patience and gratitude. This is a path we, as parents, guardians, and god-parents have to walk with them every step of the way.

Our humanity consists of body, soul, and mind, so providing only physical care to raise a content spiritual child won't suffice. The goal of Christian upbringing is to give children proper spiritual direction, helping them recognize and stand against temptations, and become good examples of true, good, faithful people. We, as the sower of faith, must also consider the responsibility of spiritual nurturing, strengthening, and growth.

Focusing only on a child's physical upbringing, and neglecting their spiritual needs, will cause them to be enslaved by carnal desires and material wants. St. John Chrysostom says it well about this: *"To educate the hearts of children in goodness and virtuousness is the sacred duty of parents. The violation of this duty makes them guilty of spiritual infanticide ... There are parents who spare no efforts to make their children happy and wealthy; but for their children to be good Christians – for such matters the parents have little need. This is a terrible shortsightedness! This is the very reason for the problems from which society groans ... If the fathers strove to give their children a good upbringing, there would be no*

need for laws, or courts, or punishments. For prisons and executioners are necessary due to the lack of morality.”⁹

PRAYER FOR OUR CHILDREN:

O Lord, Our Heavenly Father, have mercy on our children (names), for whom we humbly beg You, and whom we entrust to Your care and protection. Instill in them the true faith, teach them to be reverent before You and deign them to love You dearly, our Creator and Savior. Direct them to righteousness, so that they do everything to Your glory. Teach them to lead a pious and virtuous life, to be good Christians and worthy people. Give them spiritual and physical health and success in their endeavors. Protect them from the wily snares of the devil, from many temptations, from bad passions and from all godless and disorderly people. For the sake of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through the prayers of His most Holy Mother and all the saints, bring them toward Your calm refuge and Your everlasting Kingdom, so that they, with all the saved, forever thank You with Your only begotten Son and Your life-giving Spirit. Amen.

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