



THE MONASTERY OF SAINT TIKHON OF ZADONSK

175 St. Tikhon's Rd.

Waymart, Pennsylvania, 18472

Beloved of the Lord,

Each year we are invited to revisit the cave in Bethlehem, the cavern of our heart where the baptismal grace of Christ is waiting for us to be renewed and rekindled in order to burn brightly as a guide for our lives. Christ is meant to be born and to live inside of each of our hearts through a daily effort on our part to find Him, to make Him present, and to continue to invite Him into the daily struggle of our lives. The easiest way to find this grace is through the ceaseless turning of our mind back to our heart, invoking the blessing, mercy, and aid of the Most High God. This constant turning of our minds back to our hearts and then to the Lord is the essence of spiritual life: to make our hearts alive to God, to put energy into this activity which enables Christ to be present in our lives.

The Psalmist exhorts us to “be still and know” that He is God (cf. Ps. 45/46:10). Where does this stillness take place? In our consistent prayer life each day, no matter how small, wherein we recommit our lives to God and connect our daily struggles to Him by adding the thought and presence of God into our existence each moment. The Orthodox Church is emphatic: the possibility of knowing God and experiencing God is not only necessary but it is salvation, for to you “are given exceedingly great and precious promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4).

Each day let us focus on saying the Jesus Prayer for at least ten minutes, inviting God into our lives and allowing for the watchful stillness in between the words that enables us to meet and know God. After this short time of prayer, let us read the Gospel every day—even a small amount—to experience the mystery of the Word who dwells within His words, for they are “spirit and life” (Jn. 6:63). Christ comes to us again and we must make the effort to go to the cave of the heart each day to see Him born anew within us, guiding us, and granting us His light and peace.

We are so grateful for your continued support of St. Tikhon’s Monastery and the multifaceted ministries that we strive daily to continue in and for the entire Church—most especially the work of prayer of the heart which is the mystery of Orthodoxy, and the most important way for us to allow the power of Orthodoxy to become real in our lives. We can meet Christ in the heart where He waits for us to meet Him and make Him born anew into our lives.

With much love in the new born Christ,

Archimandrite Sergius
Abbot of St. Tikhon’s Monastery