



Department of Missions and Evangelism
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
5951 Encina Rd., Suite 207, Santa Barbara, CA 93117-6252
805-685-8999 • missions@antiochian.org • www.antiochian.org/missions
Metropolitan PHILIP, Archbishop • V. Rev. Peter E. Gillquist, chair

Orthodox Elevator Speech Contest

WINNER and TOP TEN FINALISTS

The winner, as chosen by plurality in an on-line poll is.....

“Orthodox Christianity is the authentic and original Christian Faith founded by Jesus Christ. As an Orthodox Christian you can experience heaven on earth through the Divine Liturgy which is mystical, spiritual, and beautiful, with it's incense, icons, and sacred music. You can transcend time and space while you meditate upon the words and teachings of Jesus Christ. It's the most pure form of Christianity – nothing artificial added. It's the real deal.”

Valerie Ann Zrake – New York, NY

God's blessing and many thanks to all those who entered the contest. We received many excellent entries, from which a panel of six judges chose Zrake's and the following as the ten best (in no particular order).

Orthodox Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God—who came to earth to heal our brokenness and restore all of us--and all Creation--to our original beauty. He promises that we can be healed of all our brokenness and filled once again with God's Light and Life and Love—right now—when we follow Him and participate in the wonderful gifts He offers in and through His Church. As we participate in these gifts, God's Life pours into us—making us more and more like Him—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Geri Farman – Austin, TX

It's pretty simple, really. Orthodox Christianity is nothing more and nothing less than an eternal love affair with God. We love Him so much that we seek to become one with Him, by His grace, and He welcomes us into Himself. It's not an easy life, being Orthodox. But it has great joys and extreme beauty. Come to Church with me on Sunday and see for yourself.

Karen Woods – Jacksonville, IL

Have you ever been reading the Bible, or hearing about the lives of the martyrs, and wondered, where did that Christianity go? How can I be a part of that now? The good news is that the church of the martyrs, and church of the apostles, and holds to the faith once for all delivered to the saints still exists. That's the Orthodox Church.

Mark Bradshaw – Decatur, IL

The Orthodox Church is the guard and keeper of the Ancient Faith passed down from the Apostles. She encourages everyone to seek an intimate journey with Christ into the depths of their hearts. Her desire is that all men everywhere would be illumined from within by the Light of Jesus Christ.

Vivian Miles – Bixby, OK

If you go back and look at what the New Testament Church believed and practiced, and look at what the Early Church believed and practiced in the writings of those who were there at the time, you'll find all that safely preserved, adhered to and practiced in the Orthodox Church. Orthodox Christianity is to experience Christ and become like Him, through the Church and the spiritual training it offers.

Mark Butt – Polson, MT

The Orthodox Church is the original church established by Christ through His disciples. Unlike Western Christianity that now has over 30,000 variations, its beliefs and practices are essentially unchanged from the time of Christ. Since that time, it has been seen as a hospital for broken humanity where God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—brings his healing Presence to us and restores us to our original beauty—making us more and more like Him.

Geri Farman – Austin, TX

Orthodox Christianity is an ancient faith about love and how we are supposed to manifest Christ's commandment to love one another through our thoughts and actions. It strips away the notion that Christ is an accountant or a lawyer who is focused on rule-breaking. Instead Orthodoxy focuses on how we show true co-suffering love in our relationships with other people, with the world around us and with God.

Edward Bottei – Sioux City, IA

Orthodox Christianity is, simply put, the whole of the Christian Gospel. We read about it on the worn pages of our scriptures, we are sobered by it through the blood of our martyrs, we are stirred by it in the lives of our saints and we are transformed by it as the Spirit guides us into all truth. It is the path to deepest worship, the road to the fullest life and the way by which we come to Christ, Who is Himself the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Aaron Jordon – Omaha, NE

So many people are searching for "authentic" church, sensing that something is lacking from their church. When you peel back 2,000 years of history, and look back at what the church was when it all started, you're looking at the Orthodox Church. It's remained true to the original pattern of Christianity for 2,000. You should come and see!

Mark Bradshaw – Decatur, IL