



*He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,
Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock,
And established my steps. – Psalm 40:2*

OUT OF THE PIT

**HE LIFTED ME OUT
OF THE SLIMY PIT**

PSALM 40:2

2012 GRADUATE PASSION RETREAT

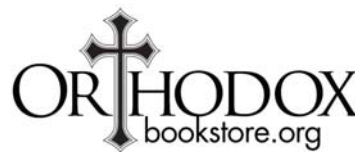
Graduate Passion Retreat
March 23-25, 2012

Welcome to the 2012 St. Mark's Graduate Passion Retreat!

In order to maintain the spirit of the retreat, we need to make sure everyone is on the same page with what we expect from each other. Basically there are two main goals to this retreat, in no particular order, and that is, to take a good dose of reviving spiritual goodness and to have a good old time with each other. So with that in mind, please keep in mind the following list of expectations:

1. Let's go: **We are so glad that you made it in time for the first talk.**
2. Are we there yet?: We ask that everyone stick around till the very end. Nobody likes those who sneak out of something early! The retreat will conclude at 2:00 pm on Sunday.
3. Sticking together: We want to do everything together in one unity at the retreat. Therefore, when it is time for a talk or discussion or Liturgy, we ask that you be there on time. Everyone should participate in all the sessions of the retreat. And relax free time is a given at these retreats. The schedule has been planned carefully as to give enough time for talks, free time, and meals: other people have worried about this stuff so you don't have to!
4. Rise and shine, sunshine: Just so there are no surprises: everyone will be up and participating by 8:00 am each morning. And if you're not a morning person, you will be for this weekend. Remember we don't want to waste time!!!! P.S. We are adults, so there is no curfew. The only rule is that the common areas of the retreat center be cleared on both nights by midnight. Fair?
5. Check Out: Check out of guest rooms must be by 12 PM on Sunday. All personal belongings must be out of the rooms and all keys must be handed in to the front desk by that time.

During your free time and meals, please visit the ministry tables represented below to learn about these great organizations!



TaDāh!



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2012 Retreat Schedule

Friday

- 2:00 PM – Registration Opens
- 4:00 PM – Introduction and Icebreaker (*Outdoor Tent*)
- 5:30 PM – Session 1 – **Life in the Pit**
- 7:00 PM – Dinner (*Palmer, Chesapeake Auditorium, Dining Room*)
- 9:00 PM – Session 2 – **How Did I Get In Here?**
- 10:30 PM – Free Time
- 12 midnight – Good Night

Saturday

- 8:00 AM – Breakfast (*Dining Room*)
- 9:00 AM – Agpeya Prayers (*Outdoor Tent*)
- 9:30 AM – Session 3 – **Getting Out of the Pit**
- 11:00 AM – Quiet Time
- 12:00 PM – Lunch (*Palmer, Chesapeake Auditorium, Dining Room*)
- 1:30 PM – Activity (*Outdoor Tent*)
- 2:00 PM – Session 4 – **Finding Hope in God**
- 3:30 PM – Prayer Meeting (*Outdoor Tent*)
- 4:30 PM – Free Time
- 5:30 PM – Dinner (*Palmer, Chesapeake Auditorium, Dining Room*)
- 7:00 PM – Session 5 – **Staying Out of the Pit**
- 8:30 PM – Break
- 9:00 PM – Asheya & Tasbeha (*Outdoor Tent*)
- 12 midnight – Good Night

Sunday

- 8:00 AM – Divine Liturgy (*Outdoor Tent*)
- 11:00 AM – Lunch (*Palmer, Chesapeake Auditorium, Dining Room*)
- 12:00 PM – **CHECK OUT**
- 12:30 PM – Session 6/Q&A with Bishop David (*Outdoor Tent*)
- 2:00 PM – Wrap Up and Depart

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LIFE IN THE PIT
Out of the Pit – Talk 1
Lent 2012

*“LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief... The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in the darkness like those long dead. So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed... I spread out my hands to you; I thirst for you like a parched land. Answer me quickly, LORD; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me or I will be like those who go down to **THE PIT**. Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you.”* Psalm 143

*“LORD, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you. May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry. I am overwhelmed with troubles and my life draws near to death. I am counted among those who go down to **THE PIT**; I am like one without strength. I am set apart with the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave, whom you remember no more, who are cut off from your care. You have put me in the lowest **PIT**, in the darkest depths. Your wrath lies heavily on me; you have overwhelmed me with all your waves. You have taken from me my closest friends and have made me repulsive to them. I am confined and cannot escape; my eyes are dim with grief.”*
Psalm 88

REALITY VS TRUTH: I was made to live in a _____, not a _____

“But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings... by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” 2 Corinthians 6:4-10

But didn't I lose that right when I sinned?

“And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.” Luke 15:16

“Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” Luke 15:22-24

THEME VERSE: *"I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand." Psalm 40:1-2*

DEFINING THE PIT

1. **YOU FEEL** _____

"But this is a people plundered and looted, all of them trapped in pits or hidden away in prisons." Isaiah 42:22

2. **YOU FEEL** _____

"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing" Psalm 69:2

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil... Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." Ephesians 6:11, 13

3. **YOU'VE LOST** _____

"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" Ephesians 1:18

IT'S TIME TO LEAVE THE PIT!

*The question isn't how you got there.
The question is when are you planning on getting out?*

All them that are afflicted by unclean spirits, set them all free O Lord. Those who are in prisons or dungeons, and those who are in exile or captivity, or those who are held in bitter bondage, O Lord, set them all free and have mercy upon them.

*For You are He who loosens the bound and lifts up the fallen; the hope of those who are hopeless, the help of those who have no helper, the harbor of those in the storm. All souls that are distressed or bound, give them mercy, O Lord; give them rest, give them coolness, give them grace, give them help, give them salvation, give them the forgiveness of their sins and their iniquities. **The Litany of the Sick***

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HOW DID I GET IN HERE?
Out of the Pit – Talk 2
Lent 2012

1. WHEN WE JUMP INTO OUR PIT

Description: the pit of _____

God's tool for deliverance: _____

"God does all these things to a person— twice, even three times— to turn them back from the pit, that the light of life may shine on them." Job 33:29-30

"My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor detest His correction; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, just as a father the son in whom he delights." Proverbs 3:11-12

"Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good... For the sake of your name, LORD, forgive my iniquity, though it is great." Psalm 25:6-7, 11

Escape plan: _____

"Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death." James 1:13-15

"A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire." 2 Peter 2:22

Key question to ask yourself: "What do you seek?" John 1:38

"I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart." Psalm 40:8

2. WHEN YOU SLIP IN

Description: the pit of _____

Escape plan, step one: _____

"My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear. My wounds fester and are loathsome because of my sinful folly. I am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning." Psalm 38:4-6

"I have become like one who does not hear, whose mouth can offer no reply. LORD, I wait for you; you will answer, Lord my God. For I said, "Do not let them gloat or exalt themselves over me when my feet slip. For I am about to fall, and my pain is ever with me." Psalm 38:14-17

"If I say, "My foot slips," Your mercy, O Lord, will hold me up. In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul." Psalm 94:18-19

Escape plan, step two: _____

Distraction -> addiction -> destruction

Addiction is highly effective way for something you HAVE [a sin-induced problem] to turn into someplace you LIVE [a sin-induced pit].

"having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Ephesians 4:18-19

If you belong to Christ, the devil cannot destroy you. The best he can do is convince that you are already destroyed .

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." John 10:27-29

3. WHEN YOU ARE THROWN IN

Description: the pit of _____

"So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him. Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it. And they sat down to eat a meal." Genesis 37:23-25

A) WHEN YOU BLAME _____

"We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear." Genesis 42:21

Escape plan A: _____

"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." Ephesians 4:32

Forgiveness won't make the situation OK; it'll make you OK.

B) WHEN YOU BLAME _____

"When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him." Genesis 37:4

Escape plan B: _____

"Have I done anything wrong?" vs "have I done the wrong that deserves this?"

C) WHEN YOU BLAME _____

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Genesis 18:25

Escape plan C: _____

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." Genesis 50:20

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11

YOU ARE A MUCH BETTER PERSON HEALED THAN YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN WELL!

"Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him" Psalm 42:5

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GETTING OUT OF THE PIT

Out of the Pit – Talk 3

Lent 2012

“For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” Romans 8:15-17

As a _____, I was made to live _____ the pit

TWO OPTIONS FOR DELIVERANCE: _____

“They bruised his feet with shackles, his neck was put in irons,” Psalm 105:18

“In spite of all this, they kept on sinning; in spite of his wonders, they did not believe. So he ended their days in futility and their years in terror.” Psalm 78:32-33

“for they did not believe in God or trust in his deliverance.” Psalm 78:22

“Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit?” Luke 6:39

“[God] who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us” 2 Corinthians 1:10

“Sovereign LORD, my strong deliverer, you shield my head in the day of battle.” Psalm 140:7

THREE STEPS OUT OF YOUR PIT

1. _____

“I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.” Psalm 40:1-2

“For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help.” Psalm 72:2

“Yet he took note of their distress when he heard their cry; for their sake he remembered his covenant and out of his great love he relented.” Psalm 106:44-45

“The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble...he does not ignore the cries of the afflicted.” Psalm 9:9, 12

Why is God waiting for a cry? GOD IS ULTIMATELY DRIVEN BY RELATIONSHIP

“I will exalt you, LORD, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me. LORD my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me. You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.” Psalm 30:1-3

2. _____

"The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." Psalm 145:18

"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed." James 5:16

Watch out especially for _____

And don't overlook the importance of _____

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:8-9

"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." 1 John 3:21-22

"Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back." Isaiah 38:17

3. _____

"compliance in or approval of what is done or proposed by another...agreement as to action or opinion...voluntary agreement"

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." Matthew 7:21

Consent = trusting that _____

"The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes." Psalm 19:7-8

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." Psalm 103:1-5

Quiet Time #1
Out of the Pit
Lent 2012

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FINDING HOPE IN GOD

Out of the Pit – Talk 4
Lent 2012

“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer” 2 Samuel 22:2

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

WHAT IS HOPE? AND HOW CAN I GET IT?

“Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!” Job 2:9

- HOPE IS _____

“Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.” Psalm 42:5

“...for You are the life of us all, the salvation of us all, the HOPE OF US ALL, the healing of us all and the resurrection of us all.” Excerpt from the Litany of the Gospel

- OUR HOPE IS NOT IN A MIRACLE OR IN A PROMISE, BUT IN A _____

“Hope is oxygen for the soul.”

- HOPE IS _____

- HOPE IS A SET OF PARALLEL TRAIN TRACKS

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

DESCRIBING HOPE

1. Conviction about God: _____
2. Confidence in God: _____
3. Choice to trust God: _____

MANIFESTATION OF HOPE = _____

"For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance." Romans 8:24-25

"Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD; O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy... I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins." Psalm 130

WAITING IS NOT _____, IT IS VERY _____

"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides You, who acts for the one who waits for Him." Isaiah 64:4

"I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand." Psalm 40:1-2

**Hurt is inevitable, but despair is optional.
We cannot avoid hurt, but we can avoid hope.**

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STAYING OUT OF THE PIT

Out of the Pit – Talk 5

Lent 2012