

# SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN



*Icon of the Samaritan Woman*

## Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend

This fourth Paschal week begins with two rather disparate readings. I found it very difficult to come up with a common message that unites both of the readings. I finally settled on using the message of the Gospel reading, which also gives this week its name, to serve as the foundation for a message.

St. John, whose Gospel we are using during this Paschal season, uses the story of the Samaritan Woman as an opportunity to develop further the theme of the water of Judaism replaced by the life-giving water of Christ. The rabbinical and Qumran comparison of the Torah with water - as cleansing, as satisfying thirst and as promoting life - affords the background of John's teaching. Once again Christ is the fulfillment of what the Law could only promise. John has Jesus say to the woman: "If only you recognized God's gift and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him instead, and he would have given you living water." After presenting a verbal interaction between Jesus and the woman, John again has Jesus say: "But whoever drinks the water I give him will never be thirsty; no, the water I give shall become a fountain within him, leaping up to provide eternal life." Jesus is talking about a way of living that saves life. A human cannot survive without water.

When Jesus speaks about living water, He is speaking of the water of life. The woman thinks of flowing water, so much more desirable than stale cistern water. This is a typical example of John's use of a hearer's misunderstanding in order to make a point.

So, John presents this Gospel story as a way of clearly saying that the teachings of Jesus and His way of living are like water that quenches thirst and promotes life. Again it should be remembered that rabbis used the idea of the Law as water that could cleanse and sustain life.

Given this theme about the Way of Jesus as being life sustaining, we hear in the Epistle that the converts in Antioch fully embraced the Way of Jesus and that they were the first ones to be called



Christians, that is followers of Jesus, the Christ.

The name Christ, which is the Greek word *christos*, is the same as the Hebrew word *mashiach* of Messiah. They both mean "the anointed one of God." So when the followers of Jesus were first called *Christians* it meant that they were the followers of the "anointed one of God."

In calling Jesus "the Christ" the early Church was not saying that He was also God Himself. Instead they were saying that Jesus, like the prophets and Kings of Israel, was "an anointed person of God."

We call ourselves Christians. Hopefully this means that we truly embrace the **Jesus Way of Living OR** are doing everything in our power to adopt His way of living so that we might truly become God's children.

# Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

I have been presenting some information in this article about PASCHA - EASTER since we will be celebrating it for 40 days. The early church rejoiced in the event of the Resurrection. The new and principal day of worship of the Christians was the first day of the Jewish week (i.e., the day in which the Lord was raised from the dead). This is also the reason that during the Paschal season Sundays become the first day of the week and not the last. After we celebrate the feast of Pentecost, Sundays become the LAST DAY of the week.

The early Christians assembled on Sundays to celebrate the Eucharist, through which they proclaimed the Lord's death and confessed his resurrection. Eventually they gave this day a Christian name, the Day of the Lord. It would be hard to imagine that the Christians of the first century would not have projected and connected in some new and significant way their weekly celebration of the sacred events of Christ's death and resurrection with the annual observance of the Passover.

An interesting point in this connection is the emergence of the paschal fast and vigil. According to the earliest documents, Pascha is described as a nocturnal celebration with a long vigil, that was preceded by a fast. This suggests a very definite connection with the Jewish rites of the Passover, even though there is a distinct difference of faith and rite between the Jewish and Christian observance. One such difference centers on the time of the celebration. The Jewish rite was an evening meal that ended at midnight while the Christian festival consisted of a long vigil that ended in the early dawn. It may well be that this delay was intentional, in order to distinguish the Christian night from the



Jewish. Furthermore, the delay truly symbolized the fulfillment of the Passover by Christ, and thus signaled the transition from the old to the new Pascha. It has been suggested that this particular feature of the Paschal night prompted the persistent demand, which we encounter early on, that the Christian Pascha must come after the Jewish Passover. It always does on the Julian (Old) Calendar. This is not true with the Gregorian (New) Calendar. This is one reason why Orthodox Christians refuse to embrace the New Calendar for Easter.

According to the chronology of the Gospel of John, the Lord was crucified and buried on the day before the Passover and rose the day after. In the year we have come to number 33 C.E., the Passover fell on a Saturday. The crucifixion, therefore, occurred on Friday while the resurrection happened early Sunday morning. Eventually, the celebration of Pascha in the early Church would be predicted upon this chronology. In the beginning, the Christian Pascha was the occasion for the remembrance of the entire work of redemption, with a special reference to the Cross and the Resurrection. By the second century the churches of Asia Minor had come to observe Pascha on the 14 of Nisan.

***I will continue to present information on the establishment of Pascha***

## The Divine Liturgy and Our Worship of God

In the last issue of this article, I shared with my readers that the Divine Liturgy is THE Sacrament of the Kingdom. The kingdom of Christ is accepted by faith and is hidden “within us.” But for those who have believed in it and accepted it, the kingdom is already here and now, more obvious than any of the “realities” that surround us.

At first glance all of this might sound like some sort of pious platitudes. But reread what has just been said and compare it with the faith and “experience” of the vast majority of contemporary Christians, and you cannot but be convinced that there is a deep abyss between what we have said and the modern “experience.” It takes work to understand the ritual and prayers of the Divine Liturgy and to truly allow oneself to enter into the “experience” of the presence of the Lord in our midst. One can say without any exaggeration that the *kingdom of God* - the central concept in evangelical preaching - has ceased to be the central content and inner motivation of the Christian faith. Unlike the early Christians, those of later ages came, little by little, to lose the perception of the kingdom of God as being “at hand.” They came to understand it only as the *kingdom to come* - at the end and *after* the end, referring only to the “personal” death of individual believers. “This world” and “the kingdom,” which in the gospels are set side by side in tension and struggle with one another, have come to be thought of in terms of a chronological sequence: now - only the world; then - only the kingdom. For the first Christians the all-encompassing joy, the truly startling novelty of their faith lay in the



fact that the kingdom was *at hand*. It *had appeared*, and although it remained hidden and unseen for “this world,” it was already present, its light had already shone, it was already at work in the world. Then, as the kingdom was “removed” to the end of the world, to the mysterious and unfathomable reaches of time, Christians gradually lost their awareness of it as something hoped for, as the desired and joyous fulfillment of all hopes, of all desires, of life itself, of all that the early Church implied in the words “Thy Kingdom come.”

We must always remember that the first words that Jesus preached, which were also preached by John the Baptizer before Him, were: *Change your hearts and minds for the Kingdom of God is at hand*. It can only be seen and understood, however, by faith and belief that God has come into our world and has revealed to us, through the Person of Jesus, that NOW is the TIME for us to become true children of God by the way we think and live. The Jesus WAY of living is all about understanding that the Kingdom of God is here at the present moment. He affirms this by being present with us every time we engage in the “Breaking of the Bread”. It is critical, however, that we join with Jesus in the ritual of breaking of the bread for it is our worship of the Father.



# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan

churchWIDE  
RUMMAGE  
SALE

## COMING THIS FALL

Start cleaning out your closets, cupboards and storage spaces for a major, fall fund-raiser - our RUMMAGE SALE.

PLEASE NOTE: This year our sale will not include *clothing* or *shoes!* Please do not offer items that are not clean or are not in working order.

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## PASCHAL SEASON

Our Paschal Season is rapidly coming to an end. In just 10 short days, we will celebrate the feast of the Ascension (May 25) which marks the end of our daily celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord. In these waning days, I would have you take the time to reflect upon what we have been celebrating during these past weeks.



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## HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY

I would, on behalf of our entire Parish Family, extend best wishes to all the mothers and women of our parish. I would also offer my prayers that God might grant to all: Health, Happiness and Length of Days.

**GOD GRANT YOU MANY YEARS**

**Многая літа – Мнoгaя літа**

**All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.**

## CALLED TO HOLINESS

I am sure that if you have been following this article in the Bulletin you have come to see that the “call to holiness” is, in reality, a true call to authentic living, that is living in the way that God



intended humans to live when He created humanity. He had a vision of how humans should live in order to achieve the goal that He established for humanity, namely deeper union with Him. It is His desire, if I can attribute to Him a human feeling, that His children might freely return His love and come to realize the joy of relationship with Him. In order to freely return His love, however, we have to learn how to love. The only way we can learn how to truly love is by developing the ability to unconditionally love other humans. It is simple. If I can't unconditionally love other humans whom I can see and interact with, how can I love God.

The fact of the matter is that anytime I harbor hate for other humans, I diminish MY ABILITY TO LOVE. The true ability to love does not depend upon the response of the person to whom I am directing my love. To be able to love does not require the return of love. It only requires me to do all in my power to love.

The problem is

(Continued on page 6)

# Schedule of Services

## FIFTH PASCHAL WEEK

**Sunday May 14 - Weekend of the Samaritan Woman**  
**10:00 AM - Health of all Mothers and Irene Durisin**

**Monday May 15 - Pachomius the Great, Venerable**  
**8:00 AM - Special Intention**

Tuesday May 16 - Theodore, Venerable  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Wednesday May 17 - Andronicus & Others, Apostles**  
**8:00 AM - Special Intention**

Thursday May 18 - Theodotus & Others, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Friday May 19 - Patrick, Bishop-Martyr**

Saturday May 20 - Thalaleus & Others, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

## SIXTH PASCHAL WEEK

**Sunday May 21 - Weekend of the Man Born Blind**  
**10:00 AM + John Kushner; Anna Bliss**

*(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)*

that we humans tend to make our love of others "conditional." I will love you only if you return my love. This approach does not allow us to develop the ability to truly love.

If I love you only because you return my love, what does that say about my ability to love?

One of the impediments to learning how to truly love others is the approach to life that we assume. If I give moral value (i.e., good or bad) to the challenges of life, I diminish my ability to freely learn how to love. The various challenges of life that all humans must face are but the opportunities that life give to us to place our hope and trust in God. When we see life as a series of opportunities to become a person who is open to growth and change, can we truly learn how to love.

Why do I say this? Because looking at the challenges of life in this manner frees me to not judge but just accept the events of life and to be master of my own life.



St. Michael the Archangel  
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church  
6340 Chase Road  
Dearborn, MI 48126

*Rev. Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.*  
Pastor

Rectory: (313) 582-1424  
Cell: (313) 580-4412  
WRuchgy@gmail.com

### **LITURGY SCHEDULE**

**Sundays @ 10:00 AM**  
Ukrainian & English

**Weekdays @ 8:00 AM**  
English

### **SACRAMENTS**

**Penance**  
*By Appointment*

**Baptism & Matrimony**  
*In most instances membership  
required for six months*

**Funerals**  
*Membership of an immediate  
family member required*

### **Parish Life Council**

Bob & Corinne Boyko  
734.451.1893

John & Janet Dicky  
313.563.5509

Daria Drobny  
313.791-0292

Robert Krokosky  
248.431.9554

Leo & Mary LaDouceur  
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak  
734.564.9817

Leonard Mier  
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich  
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter  
313.624.9867

<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org>  
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## Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the New Testament

Today, Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants all accept the same canon of 27 New Testament (NT) books. The theory that these books were accepted from the first days of Christianity and that doubts arose only subsequently is untenable; once again it is related to the idea, no longer accepted, that the specific contents of the canon were known in the apostolic era. The early followers of Jesus had Scriptures that they considered sacred, but these were writings that had come down to them from their Jewish heritage. For about the first one hundred years of Christianity (CE 30-130), the term Old Testament (OT) is an anachronism. The collection of sacred writings of Jewish origin would not have been designated as "Old" until there was a "New" collection from which to distinguish it. It should be remembered that modern Judaism does not speak of the OT, since the Jews reject that NT, there is for them only one sacred collection. When did Christians begin writing their own compositions and why? How soon were these put on a par with the ancient Jewish Scriptures? What determined which Christians' works were to be preserved and accepted? When did acceptance come? These are the important questions I would now like to address.

Christianity, much more than Judaism, is a religion with its origin in a person. What God has done for man is centered in Jesus, so that the early Christians could say that God was in Christ Jesus. The Jews

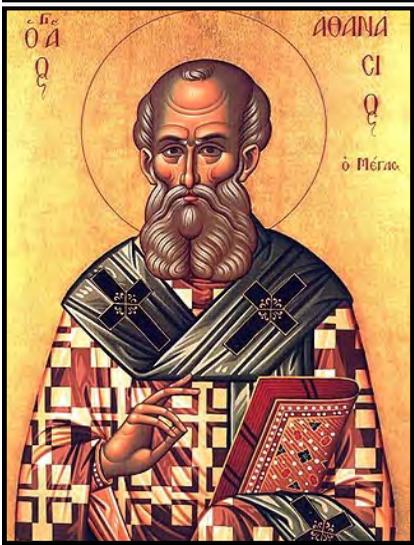
would not have thought of Moses in these terms. Jesus commissioned apostles to preach to men the Kingdom of God, which had made its presence felt in Jesus' ministry. The apostles therefore became the living link between the Christian believer and the Jesus in whom he believed, so that in the early days when Christians were close to the apostles - both geographically and chronologically - there was no pressing need for Christian writings. In fact, we have no clear proof of major Christian writings from the period CE 30-50. During this time the Christian faith was always communicated, preserved and nourished by word of mouth. Distance was probably the most influential fact in changing the situation.

With the decision at Jerusalem in CE 49 to permit the acceptance of Gentiles into the Jesus WAY without circumcision, the far-flung Gentile world, already invaded by Paul, became a wide-open missionary field. The founding of various Christian communities at great distances from one another and the continual traveling of the apostles made written communication a necessity. A church, whose confines were within traveling distance of Jerusalem, was a thing of the past and apostolic instruction now often had to come from afar. This need was first met with letters and epistles, and the Pauline letters are the earliest major Christian writings of which we know with certainty.

***More to follow!***



# Learning Our Faith From the Greek Fathers of the Church



Athanasius' defense of the Son's essential deity can be summed up in this manner:

## Point 1:

The Son's entire being belongs to and shares in the substance of the Father, "as radiance from light, and stream from source. For the Father is in the Son as the sun is in its radiance, the thought in the word, the source in the stream. The Son, then, is both *in* the Father substantially and derives his being *from* the Father. Both John 10:10, "the Father and I are one," and John 14:10, "I am in the father and the Father is in me," point to "the identity of the godhead and the unity of the substance."

## Point 2:

If the relationship between the Father and Son is not carefully

articulated and nuanced, a number of errors can occur. For example, we can think that God possesses parts, the Father being one part and the Son another. No, Athanasius teaches, they are "one thing." God does not have parts, as though God were a composite being constructed out of building blocks.

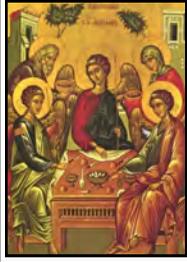
The moment we insist on the essential unity of the Father and Son, however, we risk thinking that no true or essential distinctions exist between Father and Son. "Father" and "Son" simply become "two names" with no essential distinctions behind them, "one thing with two names, the Son is at one time Father, at another time his own Son." The names "Father" and "Son" become merely masks God wears as God plays out certain roles. Here, Athanasius reminds us, we encounter the heresy of Sabellius. No, "they are two, in that the Father is father and not also son; the Son is son and not also father, but the nature is one." The true doctrine holds to essential unity and essential distinctions.

If we conceptualize the distinction between Father and Son at the expense of their substantial unity, we quickly end up with - counting the Holy Spirit - three separate gods, the heresy of tritheism. "The Son is not another God, for he was not devised from outside the Father; for then there might surely be many gods, if we assume a godhead besides the Father."

The deity of the Son, that is, finds its source or fount in the deity of the Father. As the "offspring" of the Father, Athanasius writes, the Son is indeed distinct. But we must not allow this fundamental distinction to blur "the identity of the one godhead."

For the radiance also is light, not a second light besides the sun, nor a different light, nor a light by participation in the sun, but a whole proper offspring of it. No one would say that there are two lights, but that the sun and its radiance are two, while the light from the sun, which illuminates things everywhere, is one. In the same way the godhead of the Son is the Father's.

I would exhort you to take time and reflect on these arguments that Athanasius makes. They are truly quite profound.



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНИЙ ВІСНИК

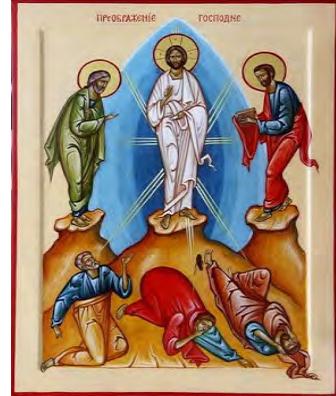
The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Vol. 63 No 20 WEEKEND OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN May 13-14, 2017

### The Spirituality of the Christian East

Christian teaching asserts with courage the possibility of a “union” of man with God. In fact it asserts that humans were made in God’s image and have the infused “potential” to become more like Him. Of course we have to realize that God’s image is seen in Jesus Christ, the God-Man. We cannot become like our Triune God but we can become more like Jesus, the Christ. In fact, it is our belief that God intended, when He created humankind, that He would give us the power to grow in our likeness of Jesus.

What is the Christian meaning of “union” with God? In general terms, the Christian meaning of “union” with God does not mean that we assume His identity. He created us to have our own identity that is brought into and sustained in existence because His life-force animates us. This union means that we, albeit in a much more limited way, have the capability to develop the ways of thinking and living that were manifested in the person of Jesus. He truly revealed to us how children of God are called to live. He also revealed to us that if we live and think in the manner that He did, we will achieve a fullness of life that cannot be achieved in any other way. The fullness of life is when we come to see ourselves as “spiritual-physical” beings that find our completeness by knowing how to unconditionally love others.

As I shared recently in one of my sermons, when I live more like Jesus, something happens to me: I grow in my ability to unconditionally love others. The more I grow in this ability to unconditionally love, the more I become like Jesus - like God. For He unconditionally loves all of His creation. The way we bring honor and glory to Him is by growing in our ability to unconditionally love others



and thus become more like Him. Think about it. Fathers find praise from their children when they live in accord with the principles of life that they have found to be important. So too our Heavenly Father. All He desires, if we use human terms, is that we love as He loves. This, in effect, returns our love to Him.

The attainment of union with God is only by gradual spiritual growth and a real consciousness of this union. We must desire to be one with Jesus Christ. We must desire to actualize our potential to be like Jesus.

## *The Samaritan Woman*

The Fourth Gospel, attributed to Saint John the Evangelist, is used exclusively from Easter until Pentecost for the Sunday readings. The first chapter of John's Gospel is the proclamation used for the Divine Liturgy on Easter itself. This week, we are reminded of the story of Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, and thereby Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament. In one of the many unique stories of the Fourth Gospel not found in the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark or Luke), Jesus reveals himself as Messiah to this woman of Samaria and talks with her about the "water that I will give will become ... a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

In the early days of His ministry, Jesus travels back and forth between Galilee and Jerusalem, and must pass through Samaria. The Samaritans

were outcast Jews because they were not subject to the Babylonia exile of the Israelites from other provinces. Therefore, when Jesus talks with this Samaritan woman, His disciples are surprised and in shock that He would carry on a conversation with a woman at the well, let alone a Samaritan. But as the story is explained, the woman's testimony about Jesus spreads through the nearby town, and because of her many come to hear His teachings. After hearing His word, they come to believe in Him, and proclaim Him "the Savior of the world." (Jn 4:42)

With water as the focal point of this encounter, we are once again reminded of our Baptism, and that Christ's Baptism is that of "eternal life" through "living water."

*Archbishop Vsevolod of Scopelos*

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