

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of the Dormition of Saint Ann -- July 25th

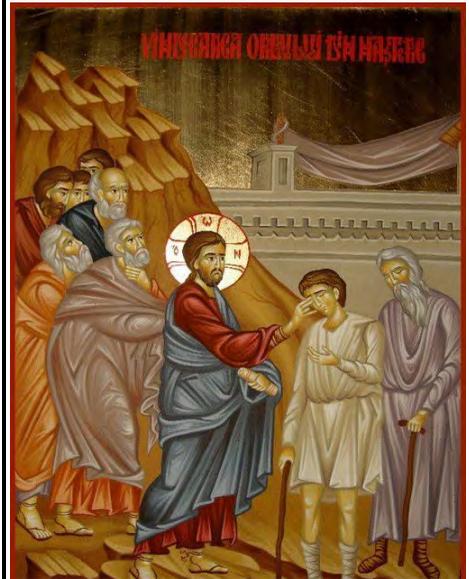
Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend

Our first reading this weekend includes Paul's exhortation to the Romans "to be patient with the scruples of those whose faith is weak." He calls them to "please" their neighbors in order to build up their spirits. And then he even adds this sort of prayer: "May God, the source of all patience and encouragement, enable you to live in perfect harmony with one another according to the spirit of Christ Jesus."

Paul's advice, in essence, is to live like Jesus lived since that way of living increases your greater union with God. He says: "Accept one another, then, as Christ accepted you, for the glory of God." We bring God glory when we live like He intended us to live. He has revealed to us how He intended humans to live. He gave us a model in the Person of Jesus. Like Jesus we are to love others as we love ourselves.

Our second reading, taken from Matthew's Gospel, contains two of Jesus' miracles, namely the curing of the two blind men and the curing of a possessed deaf-mute. The structure of this part of Matthew's Gospel may be related to the theological development of the miracle. In this section he includes, in addition to the two miracles we hear about in today's reading, the curing of the ruler's daughter. The three miracles touch death, blindness and the loss of speech and hearing. Matthew's intention is to present a comprehensive summary of the saving power of Jesus.

When you think about these two readings together, you realize that the message is twofold. When we attempt to live like Jesus we are cured of (1) any "blindness" that prevents us from seeing the world and ourselves as God sees us, and (2) any inability to "speak about" or "hear about" the love of God for us and all



of His creation. I truly believe that something wonderful happens to us when we look at life in a manner that God does. Despite life's challenges and struggles, we see the goodness in life and we understand that all the events of life are meant to help us spiritually grow and become more like Jesus - to become more aware of being God's children, created out of unconditional love.

When we can truly state to ourselves that we know that God loves us, I believe we begin to find the meaning and purpose of life and also the beauty and wonder of life. Life becomes the joyful experience that God intends.

Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

More on the second. With hands raised in prayer the Mother of God reminds us to Whom worship is due. It is the symbol of each Christian and also of the Church. It is the many forms of liturgy - the Divine Liturgy, Akathysts, Matins and Vespers - the prayers of a community of believers as well as personal prayers. It is the whole fabric of human existence at rest and at play, in daily tasks, in suffering and in celebration. All of these can become part of our prayer life if we so choose. As the Mother of God stands there in eternal prayer, she gives us Christians confidence of the closeness to Our Father, Who hears us and is merciful.

I have purposely spent more time on the meaning of the Annunciation in our Kyivan tradition, because it will help us make the necessary connections between liturgy and faith that was very obvious to the countless saints of the Kyivan Church, Orthodox and Catholic alike. Mary of the Sign focuses on Christ, the Messiah and Savior, and the Oranta reminds us of the centrality of worship to our Christian living.

From Images to Experience

The implications of the way Eastern theology sees the Annunciation are many. First of all it is liberating, because it recognizes all faculties of the human being - physical, psychological, intellectual, and spiritual. And secondly, it places the invitation to holiness directly at the doorstep of personal discernment every time we confront life's varied paths. Because thinking is a creative process, it is the real means to internalize Christ and His teachings in which liturgy through its prayer form is a soft spoken teacher. The saints show us how it is done.

The historical development of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church from the

Українська Греко-Католицька Церква

Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church



Kyivan Church and before that from Byzantium can offer invaluable insight. Although it is a subject too large to be discussed here, suffice it to say, that the Kyivan aspect of our spirituality is a gold mine of spiritual wealth.

In the summer of 1999, the Sheptytsky Institute at the Mt. Tabor monastery in California concentrated on the homilies of the Kyivan Church. The participants were moved by the extent of the loving and merciful God permeating the homilies. At the same time they noted the absence of the fire-and-brimstone approach. And yet, the Church of Kyiv shows the tremendous commitment of her believers guided by their thought processes and discernment. It should be thought provoking for us today that so many of the ruling elite elected monastic life. Many women founded *scriptoria* for copying and disseminating books, *herbaria* for the healing arts, schools and so on. Besides St. Olha of the women saints of Ukraine, what do we know of Saints Irena, the wife of the Grand Prince Yaroslav the Wise, or Evfrozynia, the Princess of Polotsk, or of Paraskeviya, the sister of Prince Volodymyr Monomakh, or Anna also affectionately known as Yanka, daughter of the Kyivan Prince Vsevolod? ***Truly, our Kyivan spirituality is a blend of Byzantine Spirituality with a touch of the Slavic experience.***

The Divine Liturgy and Our Worship of God

In the last issue I began to raise the issue of *when* the gifts of bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ - when Christ truly becomes present to us in the gifts of food, which represent human life.

The Western theologian's of liturgy answer to this question is: at the moment when the priest pronounces the words of institution: *this is my body... this is my blood*. These words, for Western Catholics, constitute the "consecratory formula," the formal, "necessary and sufficient" cause of the transubstantiation (*changing of the gifts into the Body and Blood of Christ*). We, as Eastern Christians, reject this notion. Eastern Christians believe and affirm that the transformation is only accomplished through the *Epiklesis*, the prayer of the invocation of the Holy Spirit. These words immediately follow the words of Christ.

We must remember that we believe, as Eastern Christians, that God accomplishes all things in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Western Church established the reality of a "formula" by which the gifts are transformed because they envisioned a hypothetical situation. What if a bishop/priest should die during the liturgy at the anaphora. How do you deal with the gifts. Are they transformed or not. So, they reasoned, if the Amen is said to the words of Jesus, whether for the bread or wine, then those gifts are transformed.



The Eastern Church believes that this is all a mystery of faith and we cannot pin down when God decides to act. She professes her belief that God always acts in the Son (*because he has a human nature and therefore is connected to the world*) THROUGH the Holy Spirit which represents the power of God. So the Eastern Church states that she doesn't know when the transformation takes place but she believes it can only happen after we (1) pray to the Father, (2) remember the words of the Son, and (3) invoke the Holy Spirit.

This approach, as you might guess, is in line with the Eastern Church's understanding of how the Creed was originally expressed. In the Eastern version which we use, both the Son and the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father. In the Western version, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

A fine point? It all amounts to how we think that God works, even though we (*i.e., Eastern Church*) profess that we don't really know HOW GOD WORKS. This is supposed to be a mystery, beyond our understanding.



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



COMING THIS FALL

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

RUMMAGE SALE DATES

September 15-16, 2017

You can start bringing your items to church



STRATEGIC PLANNING

One of the key elements of any plan for the future of our parish must be: What do we plan to do in order to increase our membership? We cannot afford to do nothing! At least if we have a plan and make some organized attempts to address the issue of membership, we have a chance to be successful.

I would ask all to seriously think about this question and then send to me your ideas that I can share with our Parish Council. If you don't have email, send me a note. My email address is: WRuchgy@gmail.com. Every idea is a good idea. So please help!

There are two great days in a person's life - the day we are born and the day we discover why

CALLED TO HOLINESS

I'm sure that if you have been following this article you have come to realize that the "call to holiness" is a call to become the person that God intended when He created you. It is a call to become a genuine human being who is making every attempt to grow in your likeness of God as seen in the Person of Jesus. It is a call to "put on Christ", as we say during a person's initiation into the Church.



I put on Christ when I make every effort to "think" and "act" like Jesus did when He was here on earth. I put on Christ when I begin to realize that this earthly life is given to me to learn how to unconditionally love others and myself.

Is this a challenge? It certainly is but there are no gains in life without certain challenges. Life's challenges are meant to help us develop the courage, strength and fortitude to always place our trust in God regardless of how difficult the challenge might be.

One of the first steps we have to take, however, in this process is to become convinced (Continued on page 8)

FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

TOPIC: Theology of Liturgy

By Len Mier

Thy Kingdom Come:
Social Justice and Salvific Outlook in the
Anaphora of St. Basil the Great

Salvation as Theosis

The essential act in the celebration of the holy mysteries is the transformation of the elements into the Divine Body and Blood; its aim is the sanctification (salvation) of the faithful. (Cabasilas, Hussey, & McNulty, 2010)

Salvation is the mission of all mankind, its goal is to become one again with the Holy Trinity. This state is best described in the beginning of the book of Genesis that we are to be once again in the perfect image and likeness of God, or deification. This is also found in the writings of St Basil. "Through the 'soul's operations' of 'man,' it is possible to deploy this potential and to develop it into likeness of God when 'man' becomes what he/she was supposed to be from the beginning of the world."(Druzhinina, 2016)

Olga Druzhinina in her book *Ecclesiology of St. Basil the Great: a Trinitarian Approach to the Life of the Church* states clearly:

'The mystery of salvation' in St Basil's thought is perceived as the gradual process of human education in which they are brought to perfection in their training for godliness where godliness is always connected to the love toward others.(Druzhinina, 2016)

Another dimension to Theosis and salvation is, "a life in communion with Jesus Christ will be characterized by generosity to the needy human beings in whom the Lord is present."(LeMasters, 2015)

The anaphora: the basis for Philanthropia (Φιλάνθρωπία)

St Basil's liturgy as taken in my local parish setting does not do justice to the beauty and nature of this anaphora. Because of its length, many of the prayers are said in a quiet voice by the priest while the congregation sings their part of the liturgy, rendering the worshiper to read the anaphora to themselves or reading it outside of the actual liturgy in order to appreciate the meaning.

Paraphrasing Fr Schmemmann, the predominate practice of the priest reading the prayers *secretly* in a voice inaudible to the people, often with the doors closed and curtain drawn, has the practical effect of the prayer being dropped from the church service. (LeMasters, 2015) It was only when reading the whole anaphora outside of the liturgy do you see the philanthropic and salvific themes emerge.

Liturgy in general tends to be separated from daily life for most Christians. We see liturgy as the work of the people only to worship God. This narrow view of liturgy can be reversed if we look at one line from one prayer in the liturgy. The line I am talking about is from the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". It has been stated, "There is a certain social ethic that is loaded into that phrase, when we remove the social aspect from liturgy we see a, 'failure of correspondence between liturgy and ethics which amounts to an understandable separation between the sacred and the secular'. It is all too often true

(Continued on page 7)



FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

(Continued from page 6)
of Eastern Orthodoxy.”(LeMasters, 2015)
This can be said of most liturgical
Christian experiences.

Philanthropia is what St Basil was preaching in his homilies on social justice, the work of the people to see and care for the poor. The English word philanthropy is derived from this word and its understanding is clear to the modern reader. This Philanthropia is the strong social ethic that we as Christians must have for each other. This is the merging point of Christian ethics with that of liturgical theology.

Christian ethics is an ethics of the Great Supper because it is in eucharistic assembly, not in private prayer or study, that judgment, repentance, reconciliation, and God’s love are experienced in their full Kingdom signification.(LeMasters, 2015)

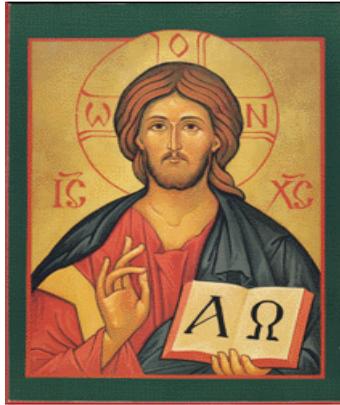
Beside St Basil, St John Chrysostom also spoke in terms of Philanthropia in his homily on Matthew 25:31-46, the last judgment, and in his homily on Second Corinthians, “The Hungry”.

It is a social order of simple living and care for one’s fellow man that St Basil envisioned in the Basiliad, his monasteries. Basil incorporated these themes into his anaphora, Petitions and prayers are not meant to be rhetorical exclamations poetic romanticisms, or supplications for God alone to hear; they are meant to penetrate man’s heart and mind and become impetus for *agape* in *diakonia* – love in practice. An invitation

to the metamorphosis of the congregation as well as society. (LeMasters, 2015)

In the liturgy of St Basil he “unites thanksgiving and supplication throughout the liturgy in a way that proclaims God as supreme benefactor of the human race.”(Cabasilas et al., 2010)

From the very start of the anaphora we hear that we will “recount all your (God’s) mighty deeds in every age”(Catholic, Byzantine Liturgical, & Intereparchial Commission for Sacred, 2006)



Basil in the anaphora elaborates God’s philanthropy to mankind in a recounting of those things He has done for us. Here is but a small list that St Basil gives us: the gift of filial adoption, the pledge of our future inheritance, and the

First-fruits of eternal blessings given to us.

We are told that taking man from the earth formed him and honored him with your own image and placed him in paradise with the promise of immortal life and eternal blessings. God showed us the ultimate mercy after our own transgression of disobedience, and His banishing us from paradise and returning us to the earth from which we came. He provided us with salvation and rebirth in His Christ, not forsaking the work of his hands.

St Basil goes on to tell us God gave us the Law as an aid, and sent us servants and prophets to tell us of the salvation of which was to come. (To be continued)

Schedule of Services

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

Sunday July 23 - Seventh Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 6
10:00 AM + John Kushnir; Mary Krill

EIGHTH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 7

Monday July 24 - Boris & Gleb, Martyrs
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Tuesday July 25 - Dormition of Anna
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Wednesday July 26 - Hermolaus & Others, Priest-Martyrs
No Service Scheduled

Thursday July 27 - Panteleimon, Great Martyr
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Friday July 28 - Prochorus & Others, Apostles
No Service Scheduled

Saturday July 29 - Callinicus, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Sunday July 30 - Eighth Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 7
10:00 AM + Michael Washuta; Michael & Michelle Swinko

(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)

that with God's help we can truly accomplish this task. If you tell yourself you could never be more like Jesus, you never will. What we must say to ourselves is that: With God's help I can accomplish the task of actualizing my potential to become more like God as seen in the Person of Jesus. God's Spirit, which is within us, will give us the strength to accomplish what we desire to accomplish and believe we can accomplish.

One of the bad things about our society is that many have been fooled to think that "life is supposed to be easy", that "pain is bad," and that "challenges are bad." This type of thinking paralyzes our spirits and keeps us from directing our attention to the task of spiritually growing and becoming the persons that God intended when He created us. ***Think about this!***



<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org>
[Facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn)

Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the New Testament

I have been sharing information about the “CANON” of the New Testament. In modern times, when the problem of authorship has been divorced from that of canonicity, the sharp distinction evident between the style of Hebrews and that of the Pauline writings has convinced most scholars that Paul was not the author. Catholic writers, influenced by the decree of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, have tried to protect the Paulinity of Hebrews by stressing that Paul used a scribe to write the epistle. Now, however, they are beginning to recognize that Hebrews probably has no real relation to Paul, other than that the author may have had some acquaintance with thought like Paul.

The same problem of authorship affects those epistles of Paul that are called the Catholic Epistles. Unless they were attributed to apostolic figures, there was reluctance to accept them.

In form 1 Peter is a treatise or even a homily associated with baptism (and perhaps with the paschal celebration) that has been adapted to the letter form – notice the continuing Christian preference for this genre. The work is purportedly written by Peter, and therefore a date before Peter’s death (ca 65” CE) has been traditional. Many non-Catholic scholars look upon the

epistle as pseudonymous and suggest a later date. There are, however, no absolutely compelling reasons why either the traditional date or authorship must be rejected.

The problem with 2 Peter is much more difficult, for here we have a work that most critical scholars today, both Protestant and Catholic, recognize as clearly pseudonymous. The use of abstract theological language and the reference to a collection of Pauline letters suggest that this may well be the last of the canonical New Testament Books to have been written. Some non-Catholic scholars date it as late as 150 CE, but a date between 100 and 125 is quite tenable. The

contention that the work must have been written before the death of the last apostle and the close of revelation implies an over-simplified view, not only of the close of revelation, but also of the apostles (a group wider than the Twelve).

So, as we can see, the New Testament, like other things in our religious history, is not as clear as we might expect. All this does, however, is call us to BELIEVE - to have faith. If everything was clear and without any confusion, we would not need faith. I would ask you: *What is it that you do believe?* Belief is not based on proof. It is based on what we accept!



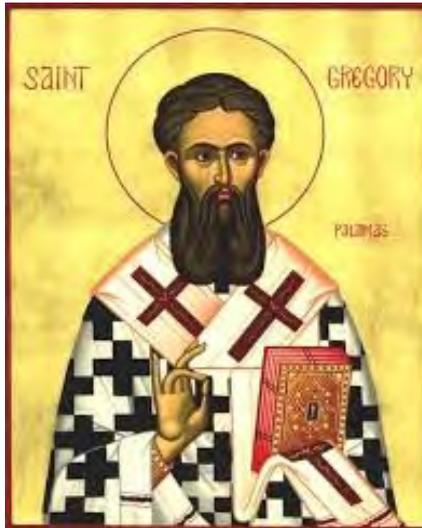
Learning Our Faith From the Greek Fathers of the Church

Although I realize that this article, which deals with the “mystery and wonder of the Trinity” as expressed by the debates of the Fathers of the Church, may be difficult to follow and understand, I think it is valuable. What I think it does is document the thinking of the Church as she came to understand God as Three-In-One - as a Trinity of Persons. In order to come to this understanding, there were many very important issues that had to be dealt with. As you probably know, the Trinity is not overtly dealt with in the New Testament. The early Church did not have a clear understanding of the belief in the Trinity. It took more than 300 years and, obviously, the challenge of heresy to make the Church

deal with *Who God Is*, based on *Who she believes Jesus is*. Truly, the development of the idea of God as Three-In-One came about as the Church attempted to understand Who Jesus Is. If He truly is God incarnate, somehow, in order to preserve the understanding of God as One and beyond nature, there must be a second Person, the Son. Then to believe that God, in the Person of the Son became human, there must be a Person that represents the Power of

God who brought that all about. Thus, the Fathers began to develop the idea of the Trinity.

In doing this, however, they had to deal with a number of questions. First, if there are three Persons in the One God, have they all been in existence for all eternity? Second, what is the relationship between the Three Persons?



Gregory rebukes the tendency in all of us to reject that which we cannot understand or comprehend. Gregory’s theological opponents insist, for instance, that the Son could not be “begotten,” because such a generation fits no reasonable categories. Part of the problem, Gregory responds, is that the model these various

theologians use to picture the divine generation is itself faulty.

First, Gregory advises, “cast away your notions of flow and divisions and sections, and your conceptions of immaterial as if it were material birth, and then you may perhaps worthily conceive of the divine generation.”

So what Gregory says is that we should not impose on the idea of God those things that we know as humans. God is different. Divine generation is different from human generation.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.

Vol. 63 No 30

Seventh Weekend After Pentecost

July 22-23, 2017

The Spirituality of the Christian East

Spirituality in the Christian East means the everyday activity of life in communion with God. The term *spirituality* refers not merely to the activity of man's spirit alone, his mind, heart and soul, but it refers as well to the whole of man's life as inspired and guided by the Spirit of God. Every act of a Christian must be spiritual, every word, every deed, every activity of the body, every action of the person. This means that all that a person thinks, says and does must be inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit so that the will of God the Father might be accomplished as revealed and taught by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Doing all things to the glory of God is the meaning and substance of life for a human being. This "doing" is what *Christian spirituality* is about.

Christian spirituality is centered in God; in fact, its very goal is communion with God, which is really only attainable through the accomplishment of His will. We see this clearly in the life of Jesus. The Father wanted Him to reveal to us how to live life, which includes how to deal with suffering, betrayal, hatred and disappointment. We know, from the life of Jesus, how He dealt with these human experiences. He always took responsibility for His response to the experiences of life. He chose to love, when hated. He chose to forgive when betrayed. He chose to be kind when He



encountered others in need. He chose to accept those who were rejected.

We all have the power to choose how we react to the experiences of life. One of the lessons that life calls us to be "master" is our own responses to the events of life. Our feelings are our feelings and no one can make us feel what we feel!

St. Anna (Ann)

St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, was the wife of St. Joachim and the daughter of Matthat, a Levi priest. Anna and Joachim were married and childless for about 50 years. This saddened them, and they vowed that should the Lord bless them with a child they would dedicate it to Him. Joachim went to the wilderness to pray, where the Archangel Gabriel told him that his prayers have been heard, and that Anna will give birth to a daughter who shall be called Mary.

The Archangel also reminded Joachim that, "according to your vow, she (Mary) shall be devoted to the Lord from her infancy, and she shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from her mother's womb. Mary shall not eat or drink anything unclean, nor shall her conversation or life be among the crowds of the people, but in the temple of the Lord, that it may not be possible to say, or so much as to suspect, any evil concerning her." St. Romanos chanted, "Joachim on the mountain prayed to receive fruit

from the womb of Anna; and the prayer of the holy man was received."

The same Archangel appeared to Anna and told her, "I am the angel who has presented your prayers and alms before God; and now I have been sent to you to announce that you shall bring forth a daughter, who shall be called Mary, and who shall be blessed above all women. She shall be full of the favor of the Lord, even from her birth. ... Gabriel then said, "arise, therefore, and go up to Jerusalem; and when you arrive at the gate that, because it is plated with gold, is called 'Golden,' there, for a sign, you shall meet your husband, for whose safety you have been anxious. When, therefore, you find these things accomplished, believe that all the rest which I have told you shall also undoubtedly be accomplished."

Based on the *Protoevangelium of James*

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