

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
ELEVENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



*Icon of Samuel -- August 20th*

## Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend

The first reading assigned for the 11th weekend after Pentecost is taken from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 9:2-12). In the portion of his letter that we proclaim, Paul is asserting his right as Christ's legitimate Apostle. Paul was being criticized for not using the rights of his apostolate. Some were concluding that his non-use of such rights was proof that he was not really an apostle. Paul lists, besides his freedom in matters of food and drink, two other apostolic rights that he freely renounced - marriage and support from the churches.

Paul defends himself against the Corinthians. He doesn't let the attacks of others stop him from professing Jesus Christ. An important point.

Our second reading is a parable that Jesus uses to respond to Peter's question: "Lord, when my brother wrongs me, how often must I forgive him? Seven times?" Jesus' response to Peter is summed up with these words: "My heavenly Father will treat you in exactly the same way (that you treat others) unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart."

Probably the corner stone of all of Jesus' teaching is summarized in these words: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This means that we must always judge our interactions with an understanding of how we treat others and, if they don't treat us in the way we expect, we



forgive them. Why? Because they don't know what they are doing, according to Jesus. We are called to live in accord with our values and our beliefs and not base our actions on the actions of others.

We are called to embrace the Way of Jesus because we understand that it makes us truly the children of God. If we base the way we treat others on the way that they treat us, we are no better than them. We always treat others as we think God, in the Person of Jesus, would treat others. Again, this helps us grow as children of God. If we treat others as they treat us, we don't grow as children of God.

This, I know, goes against the way our modern society lives. Too many people base their behaviors on the behaviors of others instead of on the basic values by which they have freely chosen to live.

A part of salvation is learning how to live by our beliefs. If we truly believe that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Light, then we must freely choose to live in accord with His teachings and His way of living. We must choose to be children of God.

## Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

This weekend, as I had indicated in the Bulletin last week, we also celebrate the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God. It is a Marian Feast and, because it is our predominant celebration we still include the resurrection of Christ. We only include this feast in our weekend celebration so that we can celebrate it as a community. Why even do this? The feasts of Mary reinforce what we know about human life through the feasts of Jesus. The Church has purposely established six major feasts of Mary so that we know that what God revealed through Jesus is for both men and women. The Jesus message is for both men and women.

The problem is that we continue to use “masculine” language to express the meaning of God’s revelation through Jesus. Why? Because Jesus was a male. So, desirous that there be no confusion about the message, the Church also highlights the events in the life of Mary which are parallel events to the life of Jesus. Again why? So that there is no doubt whatsoever that God’s message is for both women and men.

This feast has elements of both “death” and “resurrection.” This feast is about the “death” and “resurrection” of Mary, a woman. Although I would agree that the Church seems to be male centered, the structure of our worship, that is the feasts, would tell us that the Church desires to assure us that men and women are equal in God’s Kingdom and that the Jesus message is for all.



Mary, we quickly learn, through the worship of our Church, is God’s revelation and she represents what is true about us if we accept the revelation of God through Jesus. Jesus does not reveal what is true only about men. He reveals what is true about all humans. Mary is the proof of this revelation.

So the Dormition of Mary reveals that, even though our human bodies will go through decay, our souls, spirits and personalities will continue after physical death. The small child that Jesus holds in the icon of the Dormition is the “ESSENCE” of Mary - her soul and her person. Just as her soul and person go into eternity, so it is true about us.

This, of course, is why our Church celebrates the Dormition of Mary as a major feast. It tells us that Who We Are continues forever in the life of God because this is what God revealed through Jesus, the Son! Just as Jesus reveals the existence of eternal life, so does Mary.

## The Divine Liturgy and Our Worship of God

I believe that for the Church, for the world, for mankind there is no more important, more urgent question to be asked that *what is accomplished in the eucharist*. In reality this question is not natural to faith, which lives by the thirst for entry into the wisdom of truth, by the thirst for the logical (i.e., reasonable) service of God that manifests and is rooted in the divine wisdom. It is truly the question of the ultimate meaning and purpose of all that is real, of the sacramental ascent to where “God will be all in all,” and thus it is the question that, through faith, was constantly radiating as a mysterious burning in the hearts of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. But that is exactly why it is so important to liberate this urgent question, to cleanse it of everything that obscures, diminishes and distorts it, and this means, first of all, those “questions” and “answers” who depravity lies in the fact that instead of explaining the earthly through the heavenly, they reduce the heavenly and the other-worldly to the earthly, to this own “human, only human,” impoverished and feeble “categories.”

Indeed, with the summons “Let us stand aright. Let us stand in awe. Let us be attentive to offer the holy oblation in peace,” (*the beginning of the Anaphora*) we actually do enter into the “chief” part of the Divine Liturgy. But it is chief in relation to its other parts, and not in isolation and



separation from them. It is chief because in it the entire liturgy finds its fulfillment, everything that it witnesses to, that it manifests, to which it leads and ascends. It begins that sacrament of anaphora (*The deliberate repetition of a words or phrases* - in this instance the repetition of words of Jesus), that would be *impossible* without the sacrament of the gathering, the sacrament of offering and the sacrament of unity, but in which - and precisely because it is the fulfillment of the entire liturgy - we are given the understanding of the sacrament that surpasses all comprehension but, nevertheless, manifests all and explains all. It is precisely this “relation,” the wholeness and unity of the eucharistic celebration, that we are reminded of, that we turn our spiritual attention to when the clergy summons us to “stand aright,” to “stand straight” or even to “be good.”

The Divine Liturgy, which is the work of the Church (i.e., people and clergy working together), truly is more than just the change of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

***More to follow!***



# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



## COMING THIS FALL

PLEASE NOTE: This year our Rummage Sale will not include *clothing* or *shoes!*

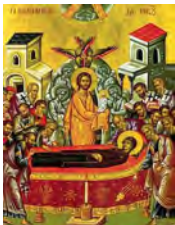
Also, please do not offer items that are not clean or not in working order.

**RUMMAGE SALE DATES**  
*September 15-16, 2017*

You can start bringing your items to church. If you bring items, bring them directly to the Social Hall. Thank you! You will also find a WORK SCHEDULE posted in the vestibule. If you can donate some time helping set-up the Rummage Sale, it would be greatly appreciated.

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## FEAST OF THE DORMITION



This weekend we celebrate the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God together with our regular weekend celebration of the Lord's Resurrection. There are special prayers.

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**Learn to enjoy every minute of your life. Be happy now. Don't wait for something outside of yourself to make you happy in the future. Think how really precious is the time you have to spend, whether it's at work or with your family. Every minute should be enjoyed and savored**

## CALLED TO HOLINESS

I know that if you have been following this article you have come to realize that the "call to holiness" is many different things. First and foremost, however, the call to holiness is a call to a deeper union with God. Christian teaching tells us that there is a "possibility", a "potentiality" of a "union" of man with God, of a direct "vision" of Him, of a "participation" in Him, through grace. For this to happen, however, humans must "cooperate" with God. Like all true relationships, there must be a mutual desire for real union.



Now we do know through the revelation made to humankind by Jesus, the Son of God, that God is always open for a real union with humans. So God Himself is never the real obstacle to deeper union. It is always humans who pose a barrier to greater union by their lack of trust and limited faith.

I do believe that it is difficult for Western Christians to develop real faith because of the approach we are schooled in to always seek real data - proof - for *(Continued on page 8)*

# FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

## TOPIC: Synoptic Gospels Response to "Christ on Trial"

*In Mark, Matthew and Luke*

Voices at Midnight - How does Mark's account of the trial of Jesus challenge the way I think about God and what it means for Jesus to be God's Son?

I think this is the most unsettling of the questions posed. Mark, in the trial narrative, gives me as the reader Jesus' identification of Himself "I AM". It takes a lot to process the image presented.

The statement that Jesus identifies Himself and says that with in Him lies the fullness of life. He is united with the Divine Life from which all creation springs. This awesome statement, in God rests everything, and at the present time. How His statement is not acknowledged by those who have Him on trial is troublesome to me. Their only response is to condemn Him because they do not understand.

As the "I AM", Jesus no longer worried about what He taught or the time with His disciples; His past was no longer relevant. Jesus also placed His trust and dependence with the Father, He had no need to worry about what was to come. He lived in the moment and was able to show me how to live. By this absolute trust Jesus showed what it meant to be the Son of the Father.

Although I can say that I am, it has little resemblance to Jesus' profound statement. In His "I AM", He tells the world that He is as the Father is. His

statement is made for me to realize that once I strip away all the world around myself, I must think about God in very basic terms. To think of God as eternally present and with me, I am challenged to live in the present moment if I am to live with God. Doing this is a challenging way to think about God. When I strip away the things of the past and not worry about the future, I will just be in God. If I have faith in being, in God, I live in the moment and God's will becomes clear.

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Wisdom in exile - How have I seen God's baffling and unsettling wisdom at work in my own life experience when I read Matthew's version of Christ on Trial.

The whole notion of God's wisdom at work in my life is something I struggle with almost daily. For the most part it boils down to accepting the world not as I want it to be or how I want those things outside of my direct control to influence my being.

It is coming to realize that after much prayer and soul searching that God is not testing me or my love of Him. In God's wisdom I get what I need, not what I necessarily want.

I can only draw from my own life experiences to see the baffling wisdom of God at work. After being morbidly obese for years, God gave me the strength

*(Continued on page 7)*



## FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

*(Continued from page 6 - Sermon)*

to go through the trials that go along with bariatric surgery. I initially thought that in God's wisdom I would never have to deal with major health issues once I lost the excess weight. But God's wisdom did not give me what I wanted, to be without any major health issue. He gave me what I needed. He placed before me a trial that was not to test me, but to challenges me to accept this life as He wants me to experience life. It is what we do with these challenges that gives us insight into what God's wisdom is. God challenges me to keep the Gospel message even if I don't see for myself what the outcome of life may be. The challenge is to trust that God knows more about me than I know about myself.

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Knocking on the Window - Who are the "strangers" that the trial of Jesus, as present in the Gospel of Luke, challenges me to accept?

I think Luke is trying to challenge me to move beyond my own comfort level in every day interactions with people. The strangers that Luke seems to present are all those individuals and groups that I would view as different than myself. Living in a community that was at one time primarily a Christian community, the population dynamics have moved to where the Christian in the community is now the minority. I am now like Luke's stranger.

This stronger idea gives me a new meaning of the Gospel message. I need to bring our the core message of the gospel in the way I live the message. The Good News is not just words but actions and attitudes. Luke's Jesus went to those on the fringe of society or different and brought them into the kingdom. As a stranger in the community,



outside of that which wields social power, this should not diminish my drive to evangelize in the way I act.

The challenge is to bring the core message of the gospel into a community that sees this message as foreign and not their own, just as Jesus brought the message to those who are the strangers in Luke's Gospel. Bringing the message to others by my interactions with them forces me to accept more the Gospel message of love which is more than a mere human principle of tolerance, but is the Divine principle of loving ones neighbor as one's self.

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Three reflections on the Trail in Jesus  
in three separate gospels.

# 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 August 20 - Eleventh Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 2**  
*Communal Celebration of the Feast of the Dormition*  
**10:00 AM + Mary Jane Pipta;**

## **12th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 3**

**Monday August 21 - Thaddeus, Apostle**  
**8:00 AM - Special Intention**

Tuesday August 22 - Agathonicus & Others, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

Wednesday August 23 - Lupus, Martyr  
*Service Scheduled*

Thursday August 24 - Eutyches, Bishop-Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Friday August 25 - Return of Bartholomew's Relics**  
**8:00 AM - Special Intention**

Saturday August 26 - Adrian & Natalie, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Sunday August 27 - 12th Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 3**  
**10:00 AM + Eva Sikora; Son Taras and Friend Peter Petish**

*(Continued from page 7 - Sermon)*

the things that we say we believe. As I always say to others, if I have proof about something I don't have or need faith. I have faith when I believe in something that I cannot prove. Although Western Christians have tried to suggest that they can advance "proof" for God, these proofs are always circular arguments and really don't prove anything. And again, if I can prove God's existence, why do I have to have faith? This approach only means that I have faith in my own ability to prove something and not faith in what I prove.

So the call to holiness is a call to have absolute faith in the existence of God and the relationship that He desires to have with humans.



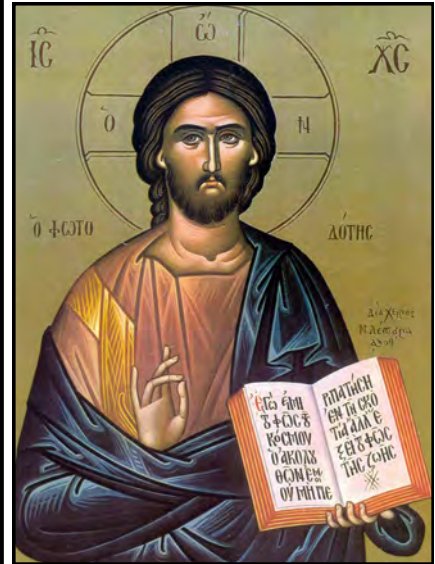
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## Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the New Testament

In discussing the formation of the New Testament (NT), one has to search the writings of the Fathers of the Church. Tradition, which is conveyed by the writings of the Fathers, gives us the context in which the NT was formed. Indeed, patristic citations and lists of books are the two main criteria for judgment of the canon. Yet neither criterion is totally satisfactory. For instance, when Clement of Rome, or Ignatius, or Polycarp cited a book that ultimately was recognized as canonical, just what authority was he giving to this book, since we do not know that the concept of either a NT or a canon was yet formulated? Past discussions simply assumed that these early Fathers had a concept of canonical and non-canonical. And, indeed, even later when there was a concept of a NT, we find strange phenomena in patristic citations. Origen cited 2 Peter at least six times. Yet in his canonical list, he doubted whether 2 Peter should be included. In other words, even a 3rd century, patristic citation of a book ultimately accepted as canonical does not mean that the Father thought it canonical. On the other hand, absence of a citation of a NT book (e.g., during the 2nd century) does not necessarily mean that the Fathers did not know the book or did not consider it of value. There would be little occasion to cite some of the shorter NT works like Philemon and 2-3 John.

We know from history that some apocryphal gospels, epistles and acts received acceptance for a certain period. Such sub-apostolic writings as 1-2 Clement, Didache, Hermas and Barnabas, continued to be considered as Scripture even into the 4th and 5th centuries. Codex Alexandrinus had 1-2 Clement. One can discern why such work were highly valued. Many of them bore names of



disciples of the apostles (e.g., Barnabas was a friend of Paul; Clement was thought to be the Clement mentioned in Philemon 4:3 and a successor of Peter at Rome. Moreover, very early sub-apostolic works like 1 Clement and Didache, may well have been written before a NT work like 2 Peter. The real difficulty is not why such works were thought of as canonical, but why the Church did not finally accept them as canonical.

Hopefully my readers are beginning to see that a fundamentalistic approach to the NT is not really possible.

## Learning Our Faith From the Greek Fathers of the Church

Gregory lays down a crucial principle in his biblical analysis of Proverbs 8:22, “The Lord created me at the beginning of his ways with a view to his works.” Many early Christian exegetes (*scholars who study the meaning of biblical texts*) saw this text as pointing to the divine Word, “the true Wisdom.” If so, the text appears to teach that the Son was created, a problem for all who would affirm his timeless, eternal nature. Gregory solves the difficulty by teaching that when biblical texts such as Proverbs speak of the Son as caused or created, they are referring to the economy/dispensation of salvation. The Son, God’s Wisdom, is sent by the Father “with a view to his works,” that is, “our salvation.” Thus, those texts in which we find the Son described as caused or created “we are to refer to the humanity [assumed by the Son], but all that is absolute and unoriginate we are to reckon to the account of his Godhead.

So you see that when the Church, inspired and guided by God’s Spirit, came to the understanding that Jesus was God incarnate, they had many different issues to address. How can a

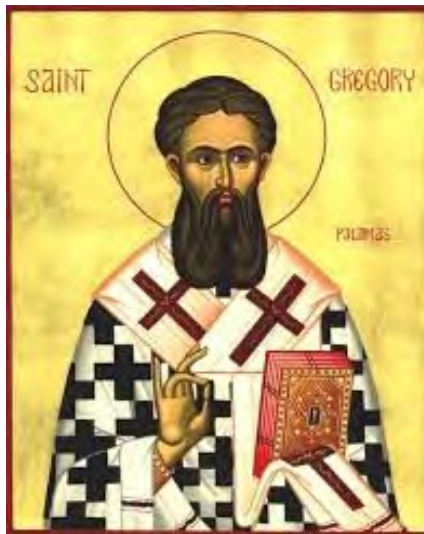
timeless, eternal God come into time? So did Christ, the Word, always have a human nature?

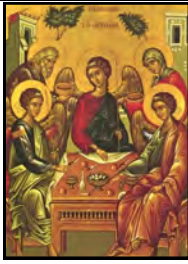
What of those texts in which the Son is described as a servant? Can one who is truly God rightfully be described in such a fashion? Yes, Gregory replies, if the Son’s service is linked to his incarnation, “to birth and to the conditions of our life with a view to our liberation, and to that of all those whom he has saved, who were in bondage under sin.”

One by one Gregory leads his audience through the biblical verses that might pose a problem and, at first glance, appear to threaten Christ’s deity. The basic underlying principle remains the same. Some texts

highlight “that nature which is truly unchangeable and above all capacity of suffering,” and others center on Christ’s “passible humanity.... This, then, is the argument concerning these objections, so far as to be a sort of foundation and memorandum for the use of those who are better able to conduct the inquiry to a more complete working out.”

All of this is intended to help you, my readers, focus on “Who You Think Jesus Christ is?”





# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

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

Vol. 63 No 33

Tenth Weekend After Pentecost

August 12-13, 2017

### The Spirituality of the Christian East

Man, according to the scriptures, is created “in the image of God”. To be like God, through the gift of God, is the essence of man’s being and life. In the scriptures it says that God breathed into man, the “Breath [or Spirit] of life”. This teaching has given rise to the understanding in the Eastern Church that man cannot be truly human, truly himself, without the Spirit of God. Thus St. Irenaeus (3rd century) said in his well-known saying, that “man if body, soul and Holy Spirit.” This means that for man to fulfill himself as created in the image and unto the likeness of God - that is, to be like Christ Who is the perfect, divine, and uncreated Image of God - man must be the temple of God’s Spirit. *(An aside. This is why the Eastern Church always talks about humans being a three-part composite: body, soul and Spirit. It was only in the west where humans were defined as body and*

*soul. This is also why I believe that Freud came up with his tri-part division of the mind: Id, Ego and Superego).*

If man is not the temple of God’s Spirit, then the only alternative is that he is the temple of the evil spirit. There is no middle way. Man is either in an

unending process of life and growth in union with God by the Holy Spirit, or else he is an unending process of decomposition and death by returning to the dust of nothingness out of which he was formed, by the destructive power of the devil. This is how the Eastern Church’s spiritual tradition interprets the “two ways” of the Mosaic



Life’s Journey is an As-

law: “I call heaven and earth to witness... that I have set before you life and death... therefore choose life that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord, obeying His voice and cleaving to Him, for that means life to you” (Dt 30:19-20).

## *St. Stephen of Hungary -- August 20th*

While the year of his birth is uncertain, many details of Stephen's life suggest that he was born in or after 975 in Esztergom. He was a son of the Hungarian chief Géza and was baptized, together with his father, by Archbishop St. Adalbert of Prague in 985, on which occasion he changed his heathen name Vaik (Vojk) to Stephen (István in Hungarian). In 995 he married Gisela, a sister of Duke Henry of Bavaria, the future Emperor St. Henry II, and in 997 succeeded to the throne of Hungary. In order to make Hungary a Christian nation and to establish himself more firmly as ruler, he sent Abbot Astricus to Rome to petition Pope Sylvester II for the royal dignity and the power to establish episcopal sees. The pope acceded to his wishes and, in addition, presented him with a royal crown with which he was crowned at Gran on August 17, 1001. He founded a monastery in Jerusalem and hospices for pilgrims at Rome, Ravenna,

and Constantinople. He was a personal friend of St. Bruno of Querfurt and corresponded with Abbot St. Odilo of Cluny.

The last years of St. Stephen's life were embittered by sickness and family troubles. When on September 2, 1031, his only son, St. Emeric, lost his life on a bear hunt, his cherished hope of transferring the reins of government into the hands of a pious Christian prince were shattered. During his lifetime a quarrel arose among his various nephews concerning the right of succession, and some of them even took part in a conspiracy against his life. He was buried beside his son at Székesfehérvár, and both were canonized together in 1083. In Hungary, his chief festival is observed on 20 August, the day on which his relics were transferred to Buda. His incorrupt right hand, venerated in the Basilica of St. Stephen in Budapest, is treasured as the most sacred relic in Hungary.

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