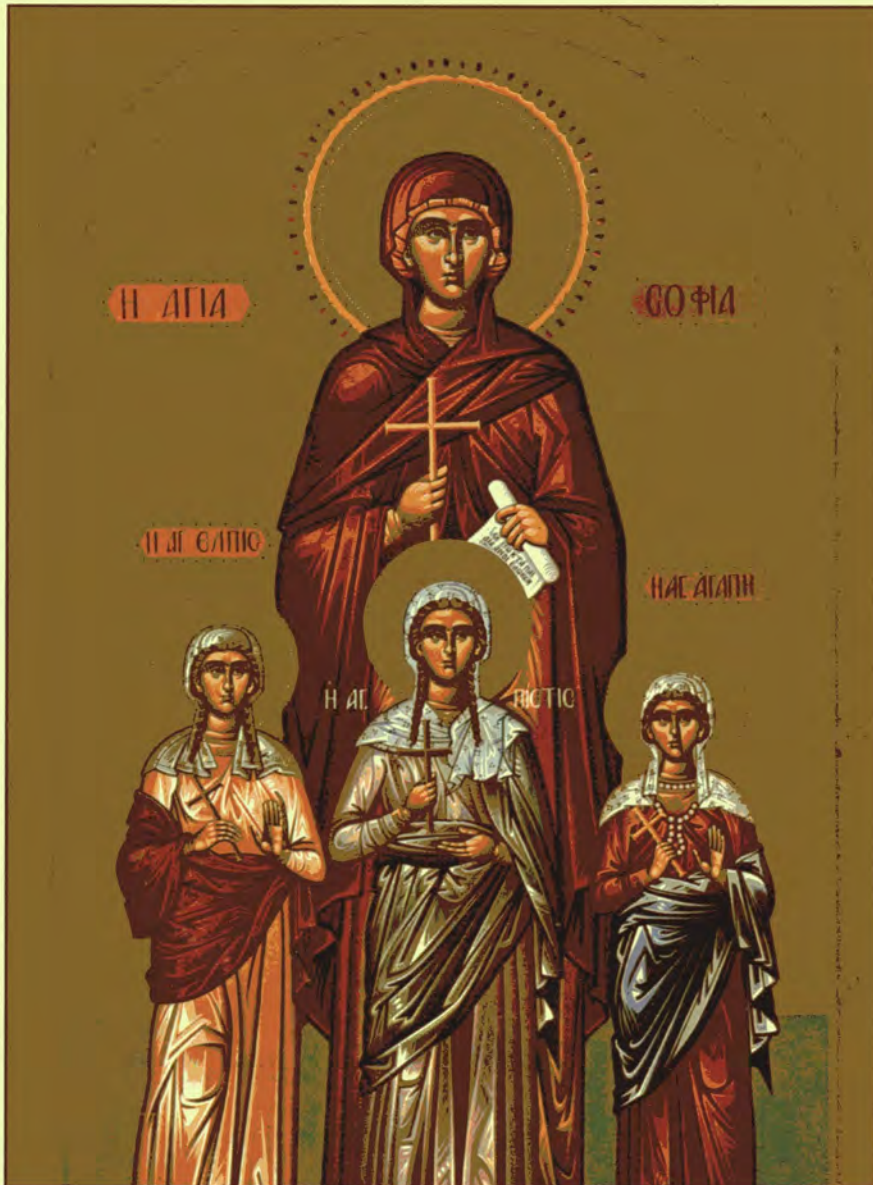


SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION  
OF THE HOLY CROSS



*Icon of Saint Sophia and Her Children -- September 17th*

## Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend

During the past week, Thursday the 14th of September, we celebrated the great feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. This weekend we continue that celebration and venerate the Cross of Christ.

Our Epistle reading is taken from the letter of Paul to the Galatians. In it he has these words:

...knowing that a man is not justified by legal observance but by faith in Jesus Christ, we too have believed in him in order to be justified by faith... I have been crucified with Christ, and the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me. I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God....

Indeed similar words should be on the lips and in the heart of each and every Christian. Paul indeed shows us how to think as a Christian and how to live.

Our second reading, taken from Mark's Gospel, presents the doctrine of the Cross. Mark summarizes the doctrine of the Cross in this manner:

If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow in my steps.... Whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will preserve it.

The story of the Cross of Jesus is perhaps the greatest story every told since it tells us humans how to live. It is a story of great faith in God and great personal strength. Jesus was a man who truly lived what He believed and He clearly showed us how to live. It is a story about what is

possible for human beings if they hope and trust in God.

I know that many will immediately say that Jesus was able to endure His crucifixion because He was God. That is not what our faith tells us. He truly endured crucifixion because of the way that He embraced life and what He thought about the meaning and purpose of life. He did not endure the

crucifixion the way that He did because He is God.

I know that this may be difficult for some to believe. Our human instinct is to deny that a human could go through what Jesus did only because of His faith. We don't want to believe that He endured what He did simply as a human person. We don't want to believe any differently because it would mean that we too could live like He did. Our faith tells us that He endured all as truly a human.



# Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

The **Exaltation of the Holy Cross** is one of the two feasts that begin our new Church Year. The first feast that we celebrate is the Birth of the Mother of God (September 8th). The second is the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14th). These are two of the major feasts (12) of each Church Year.

The Church begins each new year with reminding us that it is important to always attempt to do the **WILL OF GOD** as manifest in the lives of both Mary, the Mother of God, and Jesus, truly our Savior and Lord.

Indeed Jesus lived as Mary did - He learned how to live this human life from His mother, Mary. Human life is all about living like Mary and Jesus. They are the prime examples God has given us on how to live this human life. They both exemplified how humans should live if they want to grow in their union with God.

This is truly something that our Eastern Church stresses. Human life is not about keeping rules or regulations but about “living” as children of God as exemplified by both Mary and Jesus. They both “embraced what they were presented by life” as what was best for them. They didn’t fight the events of life but, rather, embraced them as true opportunities to grow in their trust in God.

We see this in Mary’s “fiat” or “agreement” with what life presented her when she found herself facing motherhood without a husband.

Українська Греко-Католицька Церква  
Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church



While we tend to glamorize this event by suggesting that she totally knew what was happening to her because of an angel appearing to her, in reality she probably didn’t fully know what was happening to her but trusted God, Joseph, Joachim, Anna and Elizabeth to help her through the situation. We rob her of her strong faith and belief in God if we maintain that she knew exactly what was happening to her.

The same is true of Jesus. He was a man of absolute **FAITH** and **TRUST** in God. The strength of His actions as a man was His faith and trust in God. If we maintain that He knew what was going to happen to Him, we rob Him of His greatest revelation to us, namely that if we have faith and trust in God than no matter what challenges we have to face in life, they will not destroy us if we truly embrace them as opportunities to spiritually grow.

The Cross is the greatest example of how faith and trust in God can help a human face the challenges of life. Jesus is the greatest example of what humans can endure if they have faith. We bow to His Cross because He reveals this to us.

# The Divine Liturgy and Our Worship of God

I would begin this article with a basic question: *How can attendance at the Divine Liturgy help a you grow in your relationship with God?* I would truly encourage my readers to stop reading this article at this point and attempt to answer this question before going on with the article.

So hopefully you have formulated your own answer to this question. I do believe that each of us must attempt to find an answer to this question. Any true answer must be personal.

I would also share my thoughts about what I see as my answer to this question. I have based my answer on what I see to be the various parts of the Liturgy that call me to think about my life and God's Kingdom.

I think that the first words of our Liturgy call me to examine what I think about God. We declare: "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Every time I proclaim those words in our Community I ask myself: *Do I really believe this?* Do I truly believe that we are living in God's Kingdom and that I "hold in reverence and honor in worship" the universe and world that I am in? If I do then I make every effort to treat the earth and all things on it as sacred. We have been given this earthly life as a "gift" to help us grow as God's children. God has other things in store for us after this earthly life to also help us continue to grow.

The Liturgy challenges me, right



from the very beginning, to think about human, earthly life and calls us to do everything in my power to bring PEACE into the world to the extent possible.

As the Liturgy progresses, I am challenged with readings that convey the teaching of Jesus about how to live this earthly life. Again I must ask myself: *Do I truly believe what Jesus taught?* His teachings, I believe, really challenge me to think and live in a way that is different. In most instances it calls me not to buy into the self-centeredness that pervades of our modern society. We and our country are not the "center of the universe". Jesus calls me to be humble and other centered. This challenges me to ask myself: *Do I really believe this?*

As the Liturgy progresses, you and I are called to "lay aside all earthly cares" because if we don't, we can't truly enter into a relationship with God. Our thoughts are too bound to the things of this earth which, if we are honest, are not that important when we consider "eternity."

During the coming weeks I hope to continue sharing my thoughts about the Liturgy, God and my life.



# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



## ITS ALMOST OVER

Today is the last day of our Rummage Sale. This includes "clean-up" which is almost more difficult than the sale. Any help you can give is appreciated. We will have an accounting next week.

\*\*\*\*\*

## RENOVATION

Our renovation project is rapidly come to a close. With the conclusion of this part of our renovation plan, the windows in the two sacristies have been removed, the space insulated, new windows put in and also new doors. I suspect that it will be completed within the next two weeks. We will delay the porch until next year.

\*\*\*\*\*

## UPDATE ON PARISH FINANCES



Although we have done everything to make sure to keep a tight control of our budget, our recent renovations have made us dip into our savings. While we are still solvent, the future renovation of our front porch will demand that we do more fundraisers. While the renovation will not take place until next year, this is just a heads up.

## CALLED TO HOLINESS

Hopefully my on-going ramblings about the Church's belief that we are "Called to Holiness" have, in some way, caused you to also think about this belief. It is



also my hope that as you read my thoughts on this subject you, my readers, might become more and more convinced about the meaning and purpose of your life. I have found that the goal of life is not to achieve "happiness" but, rather, to discover "meaning."

When we come to a true and real understanding of the meaning of life, we encounter happiness. This means dealing with these questions: *Why am I here? Is there more to life than this earthly existence? What am I really supposed to do during this life?*

The call to holiness also includes, I believe, means asking myself this question: *What does it mean that I am immortal - that I have eternal life?* This challenges me to think about what I think comes after this earthly existence and what it will really be like. I don't believe I'll be sitting on a cloud with a harp!

# FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

## INTRODUCTION TO DOGMATICS

*By Len Mier*

This is a continuation of the essay present in last week's Bulletin. It is the ending to that essay

In the Byzantine tradition the proclamation of the reversal of Man's fall and death is proclaimed when the church sings, Christ is risen from the dead trampling death by death, and bestowing life on those in the tombs.

In summary we can say that all creation was impacted when it entered a fallen state by Man deciding to exercise his freewill, in a negative manner. This was done by Man saying no to God's commandment. This free will was given out of the love God had for his creation. This had real consequences that affected Man's relationship to his creator. It also affected how Man relates to the totality of creation. We see that the way Man looks at nature became skewed because Man placed himself at the center of the cosmos. Man made himself the paradigm of how the world was to be viewed. The fall separated Man from nature. This separation meant that Man lost control of nature since nature served God. This caused Man to make nature into a deity. His perception of what life is can only be seen in biologic and physical terms. By the same token there was a positive effect. The most pronounced of which is, it gained for us God's intervention, in the form of

the incarnation. His incarnation helped us overcome death and be reunited in communion with Himself. This is the true reason for creation in the first place, communion with God.

\*\*\*\*\*

Catholics both Eastern and Western, along with the Orthodox, often speak about the importance of holy Tradition and its various expressions: items such as the bible, writings of the Fathers of the Church, creeds, councils, liturgy, and iconography. This often puts us at odds with fundamentalist Christians who insist that we only need the Bible to know God. How do we as Eastern Catholics address our use of holy Tradition when engaging in a discussion about the use of holy Tradition verses the use of scripture alone?

One of the battle cries of the Reformation movement was that by scripture alone one comes to an understanding of Jesus Christ and salvation. This belief was the reaction to the amount of teaching and practice of faith that emphasized the political role of the papacy and its courtly practices. Most of these practices find no basis in what would today be consider holy Tradition.

When discussing the concept of holy Tradition

*(Continued on page 7)*



## FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

*(Continued from page 6)*

one has to start from the idea that Christianity did not start in a vacuum, and does not currently exist in a vacuum. Christianity is a living expression of faith. By this I mean that the first Christians already had an understanding they had a living faith, one which developed from new interpretations of the law found in the Old Testament in the light of Jesus' message. The New Testament is the inspired word of God being, itself based on the Tradition handed down from the apostles in verbal form to the next generation, which was inspired to preserve this oral Tradition in written form.

The Fathers were the first people after the apostles and evangelists to reflect on, examine, reconcile, and interpret the Old Testament and New Testament. They reconciled this living faith with the Scripture. The Fathers' works also went about to explain the deeply held beliefs shared by the community, but not directly expressed in Scripture. The corpus of the works of the Fathers, although not divinely inspired, set a ground work for believers to express such core Christian beliefs as the nature of God, the Trinity, the Divinity of Jesus, and Mary being venerated as the Mother of God. The Fathers expressed what early Christians believed and this formed their worship along with the understanding of God's relationship with man.

This lived faith gave rise to the liturgy and community worship. Holy Tradition's relationship to liturgy is expressed by the saying "lex orandi, lex credendi"; (the law of praying is the law of believing). When you truly listen to the prayers of the Liturgy you can hear



the spiritual realities of what we believe being reinforced. The anaphora of Saint Basil, for example, has a penitential tone and for that reason is used to prepare believers for great feast days. Many of the tropars and kondaks were written to express in poetic form the truths expressed in them. One example being the prayers used on the feast of Theophany. The prayer express the belief of true worship of the Trinity as manifested by the events of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. As another example, prayers from the nativity express the belief that Jesus, born of a Father without a mother yet becomes flesh from the Virgin Mary without a father, reinforcing a belief from Scripture that Jesus is the Son of God.

Creeds developed from the debates in the great councils

*(Continued on page 8)*

# Schedule of Services

**Sunday September 17 - Weekend after the Exaltation - Tone 1**  
**10:00 AM + For the Parish Family**

## 16th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 7

**Monday September 18 - Eumenius, Bishop**  
**7:00 AM - Special Intention**

Tuesday, September 19 - Trophimus & Others, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

Wednesday September 20 - Eustace & Others, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

Thursday September 21 - Codratus, Apostle  
*No Service Scheduled*

Friday September 22 - Phocas, Bishop-Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Saturday September 23 - Conception of John the Baptizer  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Sunday September 24 - 16th Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 7**  
**10:00 AM + Mary Jane Pipta**

*(Continued from page 7 - Dogmatics)*

of the early church. There was a need to clarify beliefs that the early church saw in Scripture as the nature of Christ and His relationship to his Father and the Holy Spirit. Many of the philosophical concepts that were set forth were new to man's understanding of God. Many of these beliefs are not found directly in scripture but only came about by prayer and study of Scripture. Many of the creedal statements are not found in scripture yet are still held as religious truths by even many fundamentalist Christians, such as the concept of the Trinity, which is not mentioned by name in scripture but is a holy Tradition held by most fundamentalists. The same can be said of the Christian understanding of the Divine and human natures found in the person of Jesus. *To be continued*



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Pastor

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### **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

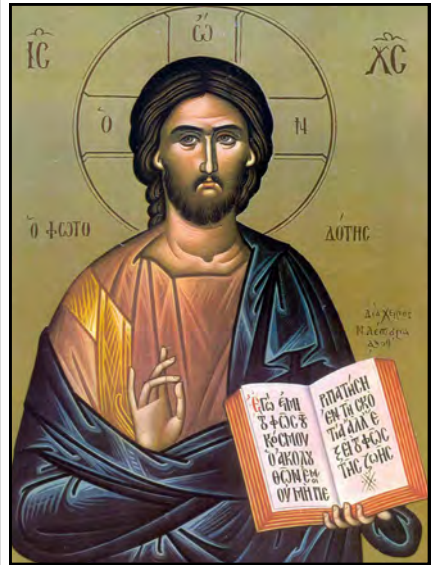
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# Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the New Testament

## Enduring Problems In Canonicity

In the last issue I shared that in evaluating the question of biblical authorship, we must truly recognize that pseudonymity was much more acceptable in ancient literary circles. We must recognize that pseudonymity is intimately related to the broad sense of authorship implied in the biblical attributions of books. We may distinguish at least five different types of biblical authorship. *First*, a man was considered the author if he wrote a book with his own hand - Luke perhaps. *Second*, a man was still considered the author if he dictated the book to a scribe who copied slavishly. This was not a popular way of composing for it was tiring, as is borne out by some Pauline letters. We may note that these first two degrees of authorship would merit that designation in modern parlance too. *Third*, a man was considered the author if he supplied the ideas and someone else was the “ghost writer.” This may have been the case with James, written in perfect Greek, but attributed to a Galilean peasant whose native tongue was Aramaic. By modern standards, this type of authorship demands acknowledgement of the collaborating writer. *Fourth*, a man was considered the author if the work was written by his disciples whose thoughts were guided both by the master’s words and by his spirit. (This could hold true even if the work appeared a long time after the master’s death). Such authorship is exemplified in the composition of parts of the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah; it is probably responsible for some of the Johannine works, and perhaps for Matthew and 2 Peter. By modern standards this man was considered the author if a work was written in the literary tradition for which he was famous. Thus, Moses was the lawgiver; and so the whole Law



(Pentateuch) could be attributed to him as author even though the final work did not come into being until some 800 years after his death. The Davidic authorship of the Psalms and the Solomonic authorship of the Wisdom Literature fall into this category. In modern terms, this would be patronage rather than authorship. Pseudonymity enters into these last two classes of authorship.

So you see, the Bible, as we know it, is a very complex book, containing writings that have various degrees of authorship. We see them, as inspired.

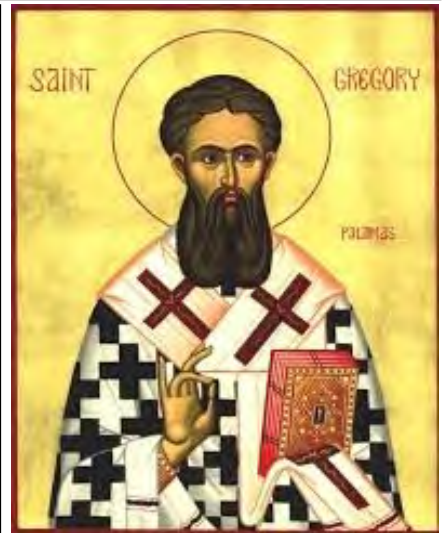
## Learning Our Faith From the Greek Fathers of the Church

As my readers will recall, I have been sharing the ideas of Gregory about God as Trinity. I first shared his thoughts about the Father. More recently I have sharing Gregory's idea of the Son of God as demonstrated by his detailed listing of titles and characteristics - both divine and human - which play an intimate role in our understanding of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Gregory said little about the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.

*What of the Holy Spirit?* Gregory seems a bit wearied by his detailed discussion of the Son. Yet his detailed analysis was necessary, precisely because of those in the church who were muddled in their understanding of the Son. Even more people, Gregory writes, are confused in their understanding of the Spirit. "But, they go on, what have you to say about the Holy Spirit? From whence are you bringing in upon us this strange God, of whom Scripture is silent?"

Thus, even though Gregory is "worn out by the multitude of their questions," he sets out determinedly to examine closely Scripture's teaching on the Holy Spirit. Gregory begins by defending the Spirit's deity. He will "begin our teaching concerning his Godhead by fitting to him the names which belong to the Trinity, even though some persons may think us too bold."

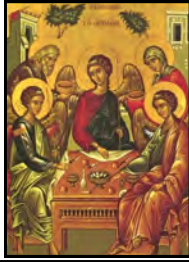
Gregory turns to the Gospel of John and identifies three separate lights: the Father, the "true Light," who lights every person who comes into the world; the Son, "the true Light"; and the Spirit, "the true Light, which gives light to every one coming into the world." "Was and was and was, but one thing," Gregory comments. "Light thrice repeated; but one light and one God." Here in a nutshell is the doctrine of the Trinity, "Simply the doctrine of God the Trinity, comprehending



out of light [the Father], light [the Son], in light [the Spirit]."

The implications of this undivided light ripple into Gregory's analysis. For instance, this is a light outside of time that has invaded time. Father, Son and Spirit have always existed.

The only alternative to this trinitarian model, Gregory argues, would be to place the Holy Spirit among created beings, but what good would that do? If he is not from the beginning, he is in the same rank with myself, even though a little before me; for we are both parted from Godhead by time.



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

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

Vol. 63 No 38

15th Weekend After Pentecost

September 16-17, 2017

### The Spirituality of the Christian East

Christian union with God realizes the true sense of this union. It is perverted when it tends to identify man and God, when it leans towards the actualization in the consciousness of an identity which is thought to have existed previously and substantially, as the care is in all pantheist religions and philosophies.

Some Protestant theologians understand the mystical union with God as nothing but this identification and admit the possibility of a direct, immediate contact with God, which isn't a substantial identification. Thus they reject on principle any mystical union whatsoever and go to the opposite extreme of an irreducible separation between man and God. Between these two poles, according to them, no transmission, no immediate contact whatsoever is possible; thus they say that God avails Himself exclusively through the word in order to establish, ironically, a relationship between Him and us. "The fact that God chooses the terrestrial form of verbal communications," says a Protestant theologian, "excludes the immediate relation in which we should be to God if we were not strangers from Him". Or as the same theologian says further on, "If God did come near us - we who find ourselves with our whole being against Him - in the indirect form of the word, thus in a form in which He remains nevertheless hidden, we would not bear the immediate presence of God."



### Life's Journey is an As-

Protestant theologians of the dialectical school reject any mystical union with God. They subscribe to the Hindu idealistic concept. Man is, in essence and becoming in actuality, god, by the very development of one or the other of his powers.

This may be difficult to understand. Christian teaching is a total and complete stranger to the tendency of pantheistic identification of man with God.

### *Love Lightens the Load*

“If anyone wishes to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and come after me.” Our Lord’s command seems hard and heavy, that anyone who wants to follow Him must renounce himself. But no command is hard and heavy when it comes from one who helps to carry it out. That other saying of His is true: “My yoke is easy and my burden light.” Whatever is hard in His commands is made easy by love.

We know what great things love can accomplish, even though it is often base and sensual. We know what hardships people have endured, what intolerable indignities they have borne to attain the object of their love. What we love indicates the sort of people we are, and therefore making a decision about this should be our one concern in choosing a way of life. Why be surprised if people who set their hearts on Christ and want to follow Him renounce themselves

out of love? If we lose ourselves through self-love we must surely find ourselves through self-renunciation.

Who would not wish to follow Christ to supreme happiness, perfect peace, and lasting security? We shall do well to follow Him there, but we need to know the way. The Lord Jesus had not yet risen from the dead when He gave this invitation. His passion was still before Him; He had still to endure the cross, to face outrages, reproaches, scourging; to be pierced by thorns, wounded, insulted, taunted and put to death. The road seems rough, you draw back, you do not want to follow Christ. Follow Him just the same. The road we made for ourselves is rough, but Christ has leveled it by passing over it Himself.

*St. Augustine of Hippo*

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