

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SECOND SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of the Protection of the Mother of God -- October 1st

Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend

This weekend our first reading, the Epistle, is taken again from St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. The passage we use is one of the most memorable of all the passages from Paul's writings. Paul clearly states a most wondrous fact: ***You are the temple of the living God.*** The passage ends with this statement: ***let us purify ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, and in the fear of God strive to fulfill our consecration perfectly.***

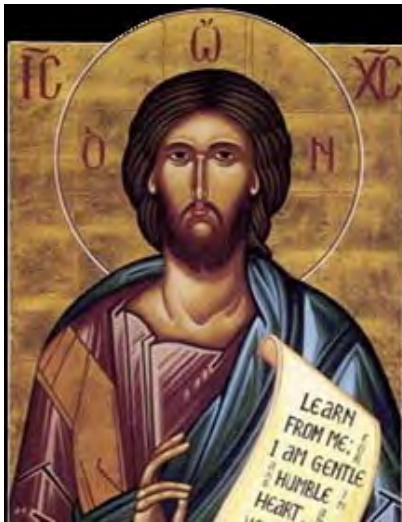
These words are also meant for us. We, who have been initiated into the Church, are consecrated. The ritual we use for the initiation of someone into the Church clearly reflects our belief that we are the "temples of the living God" and, as such, are called to live like the children of God - to live like our Brother Jesus lived. Like the words on the scroll that Jesus holds in this icon, we are called to learn from Jesus who is "gentle and humble of heart".

Of course in order to learn from Jesus we have to deliberately attempt to study or think about how Jesus lived. We have to become engaged in thinking about our spiritual lives and to "work at" changing our thinking and behaviors to be like Him.

Our Gospel reading, taken from Luke's Gospel, puts forth Jesus' ideas about "Love of One's Enemy". This is, one of the greatest challenges that we have to face. Learning how to do this, especially in this modern world which is constantly talking about our enemies (e.g., terrorists and North Koreans) makes it difficult for us as Christians to cultivate "love for our enemies." We are called, as modern

followers of Jesus, to not allow the influence of our society to rule our thinking and begin to "hate" our enemies. When we hate, it does nothing to the persons we hate but it truly changes us, hardening our hearts and minds.

Now I know that many may find this difficult to accept, especially since we have become so aware of terrorism. If we allow the threats of people who hate us change our lives, then they have won and we have lost. We must live our lives in accord with our faith and not allow the actions of others to dictate how we live. This challenge is an opportunity for us to spiritually grow. We remember that Jesus refused to "hate" those who betrayed, tortured and killed Him. He lived in accord with His beliefs and gained resurrection.



Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

The **Protection of the Mother of God**, which is remembered this weekend, is one of the most beloved feast days on our Church's calendar and among Slavic peoples. It is also known as the feast of the **Virgin Mary's Cerement**. In most Slavic languages the word *cerement* has a dual meaning of *veil* and *protection*. The Ukrainian word *Pokrov* (Покров), like the Greek *Skepi* (Σκέπη), has a complex meaning. First of all, it refers to a cloak or shroud, but it also means protection or intercession. For this reason, the name of the feast is translated as the **Veil of Our Lady**, the **Protecting Veil of the Theotokos**, the **Protection of the Theotokos**.

This Marian feast day celebrates the appearance of the Mother of God at Blachernae (*Vlaherna*) in the tenth century. At the end of St. Andrei Yurodivyi's life he, with his disciple St. Epiphanius and a group of people, saw the Mother of God, St. John the Baptizer and other saints and angels during a vigil in the Church of Blachernae, nearby the city gates. The Blachernae Palace church was where several of Mary's relics were kept. The relics were her robe, veil, and part of her belt that had been transferred from Palestine during the fifth century. The Theotokos

approached the center of the church, knelt down and remained in prayer for a long time. Her face was drowned in tears. Then she took her veil off and spread it over the people as a sign of protection. During the time, the people in the city were threatened by a barbarian invasion. After the appearance of the Mother of God, the danger was averted and the city was spared from bloodshed and suffering.

The Protection is fervently commemorated in Slavic churches, probably because St. Andrei was a Slav. The first celebration of the Theotokos's cerement dates back from the 12th century and today is celebrated by Eastern Christian Churches.



The feast day commemorating this miracle is celebrated quite often with an All-Night Vigil, with many of the same elements as occurs on Great Feasts of the Theotokos. However, this feast has no after-feast.

Since this feast falls this year on the weekend, the commemoration of the Lord's Resurrection still takes precedence. We pray, however, this weekend that the Mother of God might implore her Son Jesus to help us grow in His likeness and protect us from any harm as we continue our journey back to our Heavenly Father.

The Divine Liturgy and Our Worship of God

I would continue to offer some of my reflections on the Divine Liturgy, our communal worship of God. I would encourage my readers to take time, when they attend the Divine Liturgy, to reflect upon the various parts of the service. I implore you to “think about” and “reflect on” what we do together. Don’t always keep your head buried in the book. Indeed, there are so many repetitive responses that you don’t need a book. I do understand that when something is not in your primary language (*i.e., English or Ukrainian*) you may want the translation to help you pray.

As we pray, look around you and see the people who are praying with you - both the living people and those represented in our icons. Those who have already made a transition to the next dimension are praying together with us.

Further, I would encourage you to find something new in the prayers or actions each time you attend the Divine Liturgy. There is so very much that you can glean from this service.

I would again like to mention that we ask Almighty God at the very beginning of the Liturgy to fill us with peace as we worship. This means actually make a conscious attempt to “lay aside all earthly cares.” When we pray together we must realize that what we do is the most important thing that we can do. There is no other greater action that we can engage



ourselves in. This means that we must search our hearts and minds and become convinced that there is nothing more important than our worship of Almighty God. You must ask yourself: *Do I really believe that worshipping God is more important than anything else I might do in life?*

I think one of the problems that we encounter as humans is allowing other things to take priority over our worship of God (*e.g., cooking a meal for guests is not more important!*). Many times we let the things of life become our priorities and forget that there is nothing greater that we can do than join together to worship our God. Nothing in life is more important. If worship of God is not the most important that you have to do in life, then you have not really understood the meaning and purpose of life.

Too often we think that the things we want to do are more important than the things we should do. The purpose of life is to spiritually grow. The Liturgy is one of the vehicles God has given us to help us achieve this goal. The Liturgy provides us with an encounter with our God.



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



OUR RENOVATION PROJECT

As you drive up to our Church building this weekend, you will probably notice something very new - a change in the back windows. All of the old colored glass is now gone from our church building. We have decided to put off temporarily the repair to our front porch. We will need to raise funds for that project and hammer out some acceptable plans.

I shall be sharing a financial report after the Parish Council has reviewed it. We are meeting today.

OUR FEAST DAY CELEBRATION

Sunday November 5th

Please save this date and join with me and other members of our Parish in celebration of our Patronal Feast. There will be a catered dinner and, of course, wonderful fellowship. More details to follow.

CALLED TO HOLINESS

Hopefully, if you read the last issue of this article, you spent a little time thinking about what comes after this earthly life. As I tried to indicate in the first article in this



Bulletin, our faith tells us that we are God's Temple - that God is sharing His life with us right now. Further, the life-force which permeates the entire universe is God's own life-force. This tells us that we are not separate from one another or from all things. We are a part of this wondrous creation and, because God's existence will never come to an end, we will never come to an end as "individuals". While our physical bodies may change (*people failed to immediately recognize Him after His resurrection*), we, as a person, remain.

So after this present earthly life, we continue to exist because it is God Who calls us into existence. This earthly life is not all there is to life.

While there are many questions to be answered about life after earthly death, it still remains true that life continues. The challenge is to make the most out of this present life so that we come

(Continued on page 8)

FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

By Len Mier

This is a continuation of the essay Len prepared for his Liturgy Class.

Unlike the monastic office, one major dimension of the cathedral office is its very public nature. This office emphasized the whole church being present. And unlike the monastic office, all the ordained ministers and laity take part in some way. The bishop and the presbyters along with the deacons are present, leading the worship. The use of cantors is also made in this form of the office, directing the participation of the laity. Its character is one of praise and worship to God within the order of the church.

The cathedral office is very much focused on an action of public praise to God and not one of inward meditation as found in the monastic office. In the early part of the fourth century the cathedral office made the day holy in two main syntaxes, vespers in the evening and matins in the morning. This cathedral office also gave rise to a fixed cycle of worship, the whole day and year being sanctified by this cycle of worship and prayer.

The two offices complement each other in this respect. The mosaic office reads the psalms in sequence, while the cathedral office does not use a sequential order, but instead chooses to reference the nature of time of day that the office is prayed. The best example is the use of Psalm 62 for

Matins and Psalm 141 for Vespers. Psalm 62 is used in the morning for its reference to keeping watch before God and meditating on His presence in the morning, Psalm 141 is used in Vespers for its reference of prayers being incense before God and one's evening sacrifice. Other elements found in this office, that have been used from antiquity, are the prayers for the lamp lighting and the blessing of light.

From the use of Psalm 141, incense is very integral to the cathedral office, its symbolism closely linked to the temple worship and the offerings of incense, a very public and communal act. There is also a strong element of intercessory prayer found in the cathedral office as exemplified in the use of litanies and other antiphonal prayers. This allows for those who, at the time, may have been unable to read the psalms. Such people participated by the use of prayers or antiphons memorized over time from repeated use. The use of such elements makes the congregation more of an active participant serving to complement the reflecting on the reading of the psalms and prayers found in the monastic office.

The use of all the clergy, along with other external elements in the cathedral office (Continued on page 7)



FROM OUR DEACON CANDIDATE

(Continued from page 6 - Mier)

makes the psalms more applicable to the time of day they are used as an element of reflection. This selective use of the psalms solves some of the difficulties for communal use. The pure monastic office envisions the psalms to be used in their entirety for personal instruction, not for individual psalms to be used at appropriate times of the day. This is a difficulty with using the monastic office in a parochial setting. The sanctification of the day by the use of numerous hours of prayer make it impractical and difficult for urban and parochial life, due to the length of time of the services.

Another difficulty with the monastic office for parochial life is the weakness of its outward nature. The lack of ordained ministers and other elements found in the monastic office make it difficult to translate into parochial life. While the monastic office does have elements of public prayer, in the communal gathering for morning and evening worship, there is still a view that all prayer is internal even if it is said publicly.

From examining both the monastic and cathedral office it can be summarized that the modern office, as celebrated in parochial life today, is neither a pure monastic or cathedral office. The office is a hybrid office that takes on elements found in both to make a complimentary form of worship that is experienced today, while trying to minimize the difficulties found in the parochial use of the monastic office.

As you might guess, the Church's Office is a replication of the multiple times of prayer that



Is found in Judaism and Islam. The point being, to pray throughout the day. The Church prays through the day, not just Morning and Evening prayers.

The Liturgy of the Hours derives from the Jewish tradition of reciting specific prayers at certain hours of the day. This tradition was adopted by the apostles with the addition of readings from the Gospel. Records show that the prayers were essentially organized into their current form by the fifth century, with seven "offices" developed for specific times throughout the day. We can immediately discern that praying seven times during the day reflects the fact that God created the world in seven days.

It is difficult to pray the Office of Hours in a parish setting, especially because people are not available.

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 October 1 - 17th Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 8
10:00 AM + Special Intention

18th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 8

Monday October 2 - Euphrosyna, Venerable
7:00 AM - Special Intention

Tuesday, October 3 - Denis the Areopagite, Bishop-Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Wednesday October 4 - Hierotheus, Bishop-Martyr
7:00 AM - Special Intention

Thursday October 5 - Charitina, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Friday October 6 - Thomas, Apostle
7:00 AM - Special Intention

Saturday October 7 - Sergius & Bacchus, Martyrs
No Service Scheduled

Sunday October 8 - 18th Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 8
10:00 AM + Special Intention

(Continued from page 5 - Call to Holiness)

closer to our God during this lifetime - we enter onto greater union with Him.

The Call to Holiness is truly a call to understand the meaning and purpose to life and to begin, during this earthly existence, to grow in ever-greater union with God. Not only this lifetime but all eternity is devoted to us growing ever into greater likeness of God, as manifest in the Person of Jesus. We can only grow to be like Jesus because He was also a human. If you ever wonder why you were created and why you have been given human life, just remember this: God created you out of love to share in His life and has revealed, through Jesus, a way to accomplish the goal of growing ever more like the human being that God intended when He created you.



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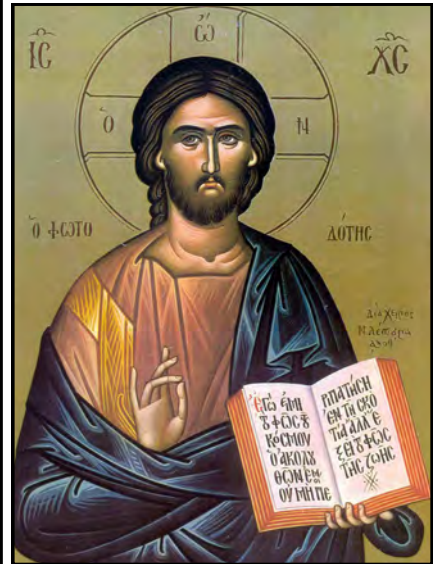
Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the New Testament

The Bible is called the written Word of God. This does not mean that the Bible fell from heaven ready made. Neither does this mean that God dictated the Bible word for word to men who were merely His passive instruments. It means that God has revealed Himself as the true and living God to His People, and that as one aspect of His divine self-revelation God inspired His People to produce scriptures, (i.e., writings which constitute the true and genuine expressions of His Truth and His Will for His People and for the whole world).

The words of the Bible are human words, for indeed, all words are human. They are human words, however, which God Himself inspired to be written in order to remain as the scriptural witness to Himself. As human words, the words of the Bible contain all of the marks of the men who wrote them, and of the time and the culture in which they were written. Nevertheless, in the full integrity of their human condition and form, the words of the Bible are truly the very Word of God.

The Bible is truly the Word of God in human form because its origin is not in man but in God, Who willed and inspired its creation. In this sense, the Bible is not like any other book. In the Bible, in and through the words of men, one finds the self-revelation of God and can come to a true and genuine knowledge of Him and His will and purpose for man and the world. In and through the Bible, human persons can enter into communion with God.

All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3.16–17).



It is the faith of our Church that the Bible, as the divinely-inspired Word of God in the words of men and contains no formal errors or contradictions concerning the relationship between God and the world. There may be incidental inaccuracies of a non-essential character in the Bible. But the eternal spiritual and doctrinal message of God, which is presented in the Bible in many different ways, remains consistent, true and authentic.

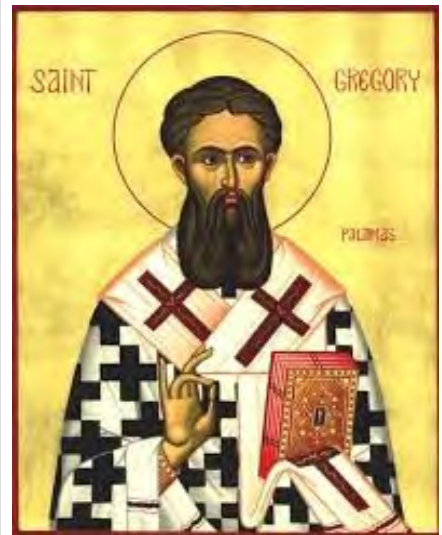
As we open our hearts and minds to God, we find that the Bible inspires us to desire to be God's children.

Learning Our Faith From the Greek Fathers of the Church

I have been sharing Gregory's thoughts about the mystery and wonder of the Trinity. Having established the deity of the Spirit, at least to his own satisfaction, Gregory proceeds to analyze the relationship between Father, Son and Spirit. For example, would it be appropriate to describe the Spirit as begotten, just as the Church speaks of the Son as begotten by the Father? No, Gregory responds, for to do so would result in "two Sons." In turn, if we say the Spirit is begotten by the Son, we end up with a "grandson God, than which nothing could be more absurd." How best can we describe the Spirit?

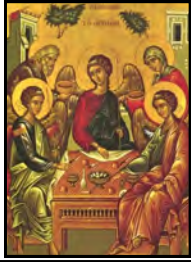
Gregory proposes the term *proceeds* as an apt description for the relationship of the Spirit to the Father and draws our attention to John 15:26. Jesus describes the Counselor as one he "will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth *who goes out from the Father*". This "going out" or procession of the Spirit distinguishes the Spirit from the Son. Whereas the Son is begotten by the Father, the Spirit proceeds from the Father. The Spirit, "Who, inasmuch as he proceeds from that source, is no creature; and inasmuch as he is between the unbegotten and the begotten is God." To try to say more than this is impossible, for just as the generation of the Son is ineffable, so is the procession of the Spirit. "What, then, is procession? Do you tell me what is the unbegottenness of the Father, and I will explain to you the physiology of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit, and we shall both of us be frenzy-stricken for prying into the mystery of God."

Gregory then expresses a common question of those who dispute the Spirit's divinity. If the Spirit is not the Son, must this not mean that the Spirit lacks what the Son possesses, pointing to



A deficiency in the Spirit? If the Spirit is deficient in such a manner, how can he be considered equal to the Father and Son? Good question, but one that indicates a failure to distinguish between a deficiency and a difference in manifestation. That is to say, the names Father, Son and Spirit within the Trinity designate how the three persons relate to each other. In Gregory's words, "the true difference in manifestation, if I may so express myself, or *rather of their mutual relations* to one to another, has caused the difference of their names.

More to come!



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 63 No 40 17th Weekend After Pentecost September 30-October 1, 2017

The Spirituality of the Christian East

Eastern spirituality tells us that every human being is confronted with two possibilities, ultimately the only two possibilities of human existence. Either a person chooses life by the grace of God and the power of the Spirit - the “abundant” and “eternal life” given by God in creation and salvation through Jesus Christ - or the person chooses death. The whole pathos of human existence consists in this choice, whether a person is aware of it or not. Christian spiritual life depends on the conscious choice of the “way of life.” to “choose life” and to walk in the “way of life” is the way that man shows himself to be in the image and unto the likeness of God as found in the Person of Jesus, the Christ.

Saint Irenaeus tells us this:

For by the hands of the Father, that is by the Son and the Holy Spirit, man, and not merely a part of man, was made in the likeness of God... for the perfect man consists in the commingling and the union of the soul, receiving the Spirit of the Father and the fleshly nature which was also molded after the image of God...the man becomes spiritual and perfect because of the out-pouring of the Spirit, and this is he who was made in the image and likeness of God. If in a man the Spirit is not united to the soul, this man is imperfect. He remains animal and carnal. He continues to have the image of God in his flesh, but he does not receive the divine likeness through the Holy Spirit.



Life's Journey is an Ascension to the Heavenly Father

Our spiritual growth comes about by our free cooperation with the Spirit of God. We cannot grow on our own. We need God's help, which He freely gives to us if we so desire it. We need God's help. This means that we have to freely desire His help if we want to become all that we are created to be. Without His help we cannot become who we are meant to be. With His help we can be truly His child.

Litany of Praise to the Theotokos

Hail, O Mary, Mother of God, Virgin and Mother! Morning Star, perfect vessel. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! Holy temple in which God Himself was conceived. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! Chaste and pure dove. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! Ever-radiant light; from thee proceeds the Sun of Justice. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! You enclosed in your sacred womb the One Who cannot be encompassed. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God!

With the shepherds we sing the praise of God, and with the angels the song of

thanksgiving: Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! Through you came to us the Conqueror and the triumphant Vanquisher of hell. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! Through you blossoms the splendor of the resurrection. We salute thee, Mother of God. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! You have saved every faithful Christian. Hail, O Mary, Mother of God! Who can praise you worthily, O glorious Virgin Mary! We salute thee, Mother of God.

St. Cyril of Alexandria

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