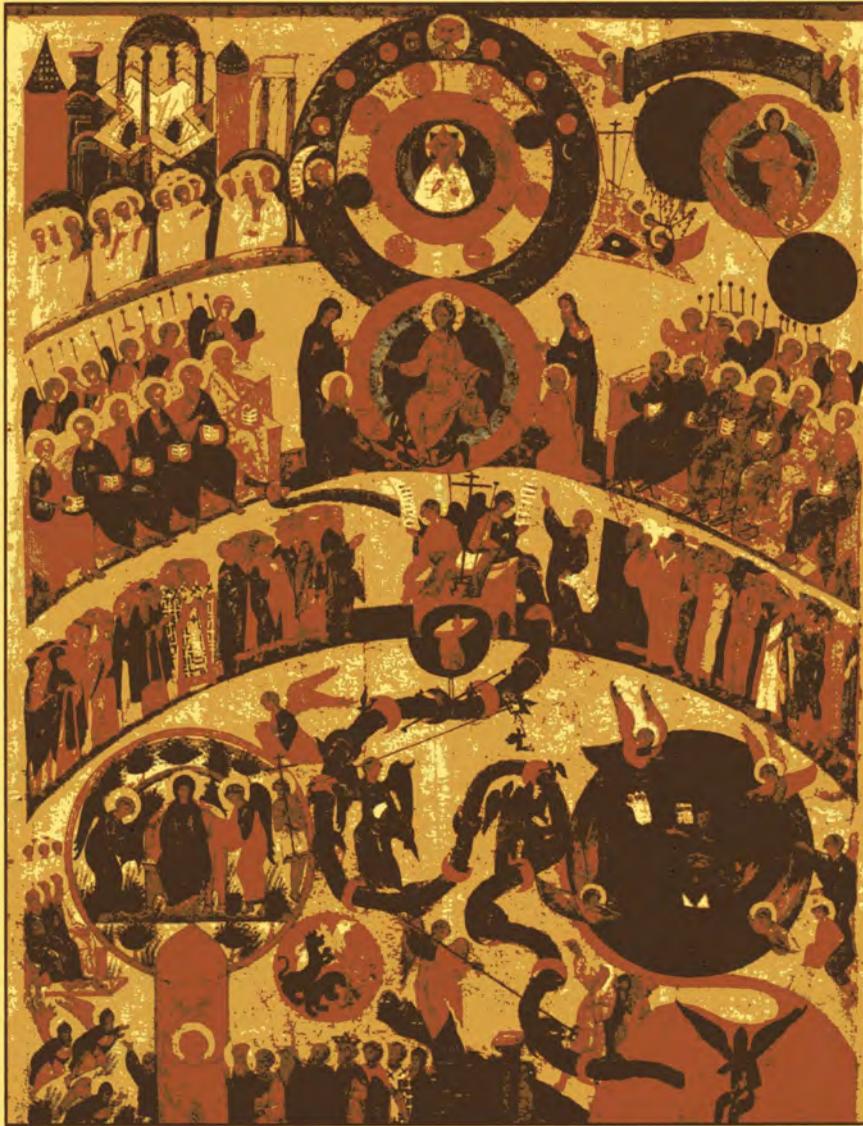


MEATFARE SUNDAY  
SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT



*Icon of the Last Judgment*

## Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend

On this weekend of Meatfare, the readings we hear are taken from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians and from Matthew's Gospel. The readings, it is my contention, try to give us ideas that we can use to help guide us through the observance of the Great Fast.

The selection from Paul's letter tries to remind us that how we observe the Great Fast is our own choice and we should never judge others by the way they observe it. He clearly reminds us that "food does not bring us closer to God. We suffer no loss through failing to eat, and we gain no favor by eating." The Church recommends fasting during this time only because it helps us to develop personal "discipline" and focus our efforts on our personal, spiritual development. God will not love us any more because we fast. If we fast, we may, perhaps, think more about why we are fasting and work to develop our spiritual lives.

Matthew's Gospel tells us, in effect, that personal spirituality is developed when we "think about" and "assist" others who may be in need - *feed the hungry, visit the sick, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty and visit those in prison*. The spirituality of Jesus models how we must actively treat others. In very many ways Jesus shows us that we must be our brother's keeper and supporter. Why? Because this allows us to develop compassion and concern for others and also helps us to see that we are all a part of one human



family. When we develop this sense that all others are a part of the same human family, life changes. When we begin to truly believe that all humans share the same source of life, life changes. When we understand that God's way of helping us to develop our spiritual natures is by *loving our neighbors as ourselves*, life changes.

We cannot truly grow spiritually if we refuse to love others as ourselves. Life brings different humans together for the sake of helping them to grow as children of God. Anytime we look at another human and negatively judge them and separate ourselves from them, we diminish our ability to spiritually grow.

The true task of this earthly life is to learn how to embrace all other humans - regardless of their race, religion or behaviors - as part of the same family, then life changes and we become more like Jesus Christ, God's revelation to us on what humans must be like in order to grow in their relationship to God.

# Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

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Our religious *tradition* encourages us to integrate some sort of *fasting* into our lives during the Great Fast. Why? To help us focus more intensely on our spiritual growth. Spirituality must not be viewed as something that does not concern the body. Spirituality is something that is made possible through and within the body. The desires and needs of the flesh can all too often overpower the spirit. Fasting is a means of restoring balance between soul and body - a means of bringing the flesh under the control and will of the mind and spirit.

## Recommended Minimal Effort

- Abstain from meat and dairy products on the first day of the Fast (*February 12*) and Great and Good Friday (*March 30*)
- Abstain from meat on **All Fridays** of Lent and Holy Saturday (*March 31*)

*In order to enter into the spirit of the Great Fast this is seen as a minimal effort*

## A Strict Lenten Tradition

- Abstain from *meat products*, even weekends, the day after Meat Fare (*February 4*) until after Easter services (*April 1*)
- Abstain from *daily products*, even weekends, the day after Cheese Fare (*February 11*) until after Easter services (*April 1*)

*This is seen as the most traditional way to observe the Great Fast*



## Modified Strict Lenten Tradition

A *modified version* of the strict tradition calls for us, in addition to the *minimal effort* suggested, to *abstain from meat* on all Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent and all the days of Great and Holy Week (*March 26-31*) and pray more frequently.

However we observe the Great Fast, it should never be done out of a feeling of *obligation*. In order to benefit from this time, we have to freely embrace practices that can help us to spiritually grow (*the emphasis is placed on FREELY*).

As we have already seen in the weekends of preparation for the Great Fast, we have to *desire* to become more like Jesus - we have to *desire* to spiritually grow and want to return to our Heavenly Father's house.

There may be many reasons why a person can't observe the Great Fast in either a *minimal* or *strict* way (*i.e., age, health*). Your effort is something that must be between you and God. If we are honest and sincere with God, He accepts our decision on how we observe the Great Fast.

***Our main purpose of the Great Fast is to build our relationship with God!***

## Our Worship of God Through the Great Fast

For many Eastern Christians, the Great Fast consists in a limited number of formal, predominantly negative, rules and prescription: abstention from certain food, prohibition to dance, maybe no movies. The Church seems to suggest that it is a time for us to be “quiet” and more focused on internal growth. Such is the degree of our alienation from the real spirit of the Church. There is truly something else about the Great Fast - something without which all these suggestions lose their meaning. This *something else* can best be described as an *atmosphere*, a *climate* into which one enters, as first of all a state of mind, soul and spirit which for seven weeks permeates our entire life. It's not about the Church trying to force upon us a few formal obligations, but to *soften* our hearts and minds so that we may open ourselves to the realities of the spirit - to experience the hidden *thirst and hunger* for true and real *communion* with God.

We must always remember that what we do to observe the Great Fast does not change God's attitude toward us. He unconditionally loves regardless of what we do. Further, we cannot grow in our relationship with Him if we don't *freely* choose to return His love by doing things that will help us to focus our attention on our real and genuine relationship with Him.



The *atmosphere* of the Great Fast is an unique *state of mind* that is brought about mainly by means of worship, by the various changes introduced during this season into our liturgical and personal life.

First, we change our regular worship and embrace the longer Liturgy of St. Basil the Great on the weekends. Second, the Liturgy is not served during the week days because of the fact of our fasting. We also introduce the Presanctified Liturgy into our weekly routine of worship - or *at least we are encouraged to introduce this unique service into our lives (there is truly a unique feeling to this form of worship).*

The hymns of the *Triodion* are truly wonderful (*The Triodion is that period of time from the weekend of the Prodigal Son until Great and Good Saturday*). They express in a real way the Eastern Church's expression of the attitude of mind that we must have to transform our lives.



# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan

## SOMETHING NEW



Our Parish Council purchased and installed

### An Automated External Defibrillator

and training will be offered on its use on March 11th immediately after our Sunday Liturgy. CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training will also be provided at that time. If there is anyone who would be interested in participating in this training, please let a Council Member know.

\*\*\*\*\*

## SAVE THIS DATE

*Sunday, March 4th*

It has become one of our parish traditions to gather, on the Third Sunday of the Great Fast, to share a meal of meatless soups. It is always a wonderful and delicious event. **SAVE THE DATE!**



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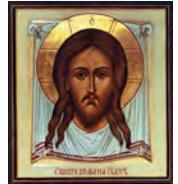
## REMEMBER

**The 2018 GREAT FAST begins on Monday, February 12th**

*In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: it goes on*

## CALLED TO HOLINESS

I have shared my thoughts about the word *holy* in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. I would now share some thoughts about the English word *holy*.



The English word has its origins in the Old English word *hālig*, meaning whole. This implies an understanding that holiness is, in a sense, a destiny or destination. To be holy means one has lived into their very nature. This is consistent with the Christian view that human life is itself *sacred*, a word that also comes from the Latin word *sanctus*.

Each person has been created to be holy, made as an image bearer of the divine, and therefore is ontologically related and rooted in God. The image of God that we are called to reflect is that of the Son, Jesus.

To call something *holy* is to speak fundamentally of something's genuine relationship with God. It's a term rooted in in the temple codes of the Pentateuch, and developed in the liturgical life of the Christian Church. When the creed speaks of the Church being holy it is using cultic language declaring the Church itself as a sanctuary of

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Ideas for Observing the Great Fast

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There is one important question each of us must ask as we prepare to truly enter into the Great Fast: *What can I do during this time that will help me to more intensely focus on my spiritual growth?* It is worthless to just follow some practice - like “giving something up” - if it will not help you to achieve what the Great Fast is meant to help us accomplish - that is some spiritual growth and opening our minds and hearts to understand that which we will celebrate during the Great and Holy Week. The Church’s traditional approach is to eliminate something in our life in order to build personal discipline.

We also must have the right attitude about the observance of this time. It is not about “hoping the God will love us more” and it is not about thinking that our puny efforts at self-denial will “gain heaven.” Its about trying to increase of personal, spiritual growth - our personal transformation. Its all about focusing our efforts to grow as children of God.

For example, if I am a person who finds it difficult to keep in-touch with my friends, I might try to reach out more often during this time to stay in contact with them. Genuine human relationships are essential if I am to

have a genuine relationship with God.

If I discover that I become too absorbed in the things of this world and not devote enough time to my spiritual life, I could try eliminating television or radio from my life and send more time in spiritual reading or prayer.

If I am not moderate in anything in my life - eating, drinking or social media - I might think about limiting these things to only what is essential.

Again, this time is meant to help us develop personal discipline and to focus our efforts on spiritual growth. I suspect that most of us spend little time thinking about and/or working on our spiritual growth. It just seems to abstract.

I really and truly believe that it is all about *freely* choosing to do something that pertains to the spiritual dimension of our lives. The Church has found, after centuries of experience, that the traditional practices do seem to have the power to accomplish this. In our modern world *fasting*, unless we are on a diet because we want to improve our looks, is not well received.

***A suggestion: try several different things and see which are most effective for you to accomplish the goal of the Fast!***



## The Courage to Pray

The condition of a life of prayer is a life in accordance with the Gospel. A life which makes the teachings of Jesus second nature. It is not enough to obey them as a slave obeys his master's will. We must want to obey with all our heart, like children of the kingdom who truly mean what they pray when they say *Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done.*

I would like to now consider an encounter with the Lord in a number of particular situations, in humility, in truth, in despair, in tumult, in life, in silence and in the Liturgy.

If we remembered that every encounter with God and every deep encounter with man is a judgment, a crisis, we would seek God both more whole-heartedly and more cautiously. We would not be bitter if this encounter did not immediately take place. We would approach God with a trembling heart. In this way we would avoid many disappointments, many useless efforts, because God would not give himself to us if we could not bear the encounter. He prepares us for it, and sometimes by a long wait. The Gospel gives us examples of the attitude we should imitate. Luke shows us ten lepers seeking to be cured. They come towards Christ and stop a little way off because they know they are impure. And in their misery they cry to the Lord with all the faith and hope they are capable of but without going up to him. And the Lord does not take one step towards them. He simply commands them to go to show themselves to the priests. He promises them nothing. He sends them to their cure. And this cure is granted them in their faith, hope and humble obedience. How different is their humility from our prayer of 'humble access' when we should be trembling but are often arrogant.



We may also remember the example of St. Peter who realized his master's godhead through his words and the miraculous draught of fishes, and fell at his feet crying, 'depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord'. The vision of the holiness and glory of God did not lead him to seek an intimacy with it which he could not bear. He asked the Lord to go away. But the Lord decided to stay.

In order to enter into a real encounter with God, we have to have the courage to pray and then the courage to patiently wait and see and accept God's response.

# SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

**Sunday, February 4 – Weekend of Meatfare - Tone 2**  
**10:00 AM + Adrian Bluj; Wife Luba and Family**

## WEEK OF CHEESEFARE - TONE 3

Monday, February 5 - Agatha, Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Tuesday, February 6 - Bucolus, Bishop  
*No Service Scheduled*

Wednesday, February 7 - Parthenius, Bishop  
*No Service Scheduled*

Thursday, February 8 - Theodore, Great Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Friday, February 9 - Nicephor, Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Saturday February 10 - All Ascetical Fathers & Mothers  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Sunday February 11 – Weekend of Cheesefare - Tone 2**  
**10:00 AM + Michael Papinchak; Robert & Corinne Boyko**

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

of divine communion. It is also offering the faithful their marching orders to actualize their potential to become like Jesus, the Christ.

The word “holy” is often expressed as a *hunger* for a true relationship with God. There are many references to hunger in the New Testament. Some of them refer to *physical hunger*, while many others refer to *spiritual hunger*. In Matthew’s Gospel, Chapter 4 verse 2, we read that Christ “fasted forty days and forty nights and afterward He was *hungry*.” The second reference, which appears in the Sermon on the Mount, Chapter 5, the reference is to *spiritual hunger*. Christ says: “Blessed are those who *hunger* and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied”.

To have a *hunger* for holiness is to have a desire to have a genuine relationship with God.



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

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

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

### LITURGY SCHEDULE

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

**Weekdays @ 8:00 AM**  
English

### SACRAMENTS

**Penance**  
*By Appointment*

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

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

### Parish Life Council

Bob & Corinne Boyko  
734.451.1893

John & Janet Dicky  
313.563.5509

Daria Drobny  
313.791-0292

Robert Krokosky  
248.431.9554

Leo & Mary LaDouceur  
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak  
734.564.9817

Leonard Mier  
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich  
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter  
313.624.9867

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

## A Theme For Prayer During the Coming Week

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After hearing the readings for this weekend, I would suggest that the theme we center our daily prayer around is *love of neighbor*. If I have any disregard for a person, I need to pray for them, asking Almighty God to bless them.

If I have any prejudice against any other group of people, I need to include them in my prayers and ask God to bless them. This is important especially if I have any prejudicial thoughts about any group of people who may not be like me in anyway. Having an open mind toward others is critical if we are to be true followers of Jesus. The attitudes that can keep us from being more like Jesus are *prejudice* and *bigotry* (which seem to be very rampant in our modern world for a variety of reasons). A part of our prayer should be that we see all others as brothers and sisters - that we see all humans being a part of the same human family.

Further, to remember the poor and the disadvantaged, the disabled, the sick and even those in prison in our prayers, allows us to further develop within ourselves a mind like Christ.

The problem is that typically the

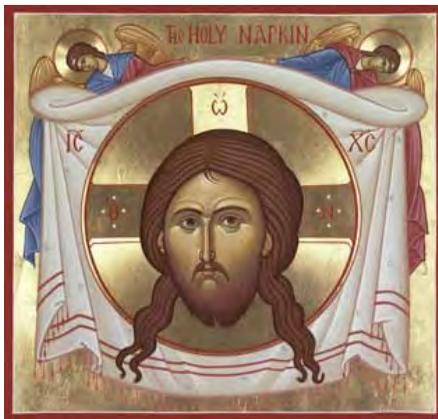
only people we include in our prayers are ourselves, our relatives and our friends. I suspect that most of us never think about praying for all the people in prison or the homeless. This is probably because we don't consider them a part of our lives. And of course we would never consider praying for our enemies!

God calls us, through Jesus, to begin thinking about ourselves as a part of the *human family*. The family includes all others, regardless of their

relationship to us or the kind of people they are. If someone in your family was in prison, would you pray for him or her? If someone in your family was homeless, would you pray for him?

So one of the petitions we could make during this coming week would be: *O God, increase my understanding of my human family*. There was no person that Jesus failed to see as a part of his life.

So first, look into yourself and discover if you have any prejudices - feeling against a group of people - and then pray for those people. This will help open your heart and mind and become more like Jesus Christ, more like a child of God.



## Learning our Faith from the Greek Fathers of the Church

This continues the information about the debate between Nestorius the heretic and St. Cyril of Alexandria.

To assert, as Nestorius seemed to do, that “the Word of God did not become flesh, or rather did not undergo birth from a woman according to the flesh,” could only serve to “bankrupt the economy of salvation”. That is, the Word must become what we are if we are to obtain the deliverance and riches he can and desires to give us. Apart from such an intimate union, we would remain tied to Adam, “deprived of any return to a better condition.”

Thus Cyril writes, the economy that was demonstrated in the incarnation must be affirmed. Nestorius’ language, that is the language of mere association, fails to do this. Or at least such is the case as Cyril reads him. One will be tempted to accuse Cyril of theological nitpicking if we overlook the fundamental rationale of his argument: we cannot be saved if the Word did not become what we are. For example, Cyril asks, how can Christ’s blood save us “if it was in

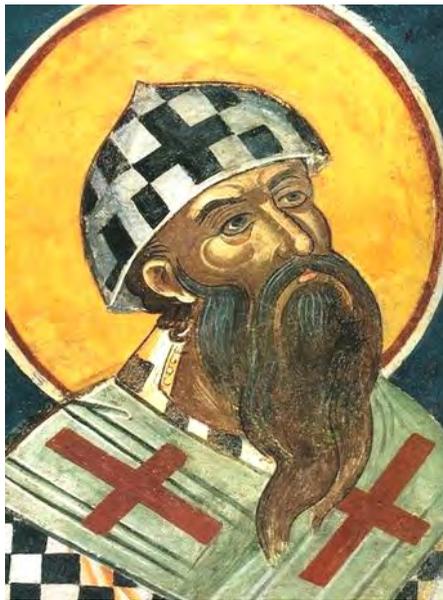
reality only that of an ordinary man subject to sin?”

Cyril insists that it is through the ineffable union of human nature with the ‘personal riches of the Word that death and sin is condemned and conquered.’ It is in this union with the Word incarnate, a union “full of divine energy”, that sin is overcome. Thus, when Cyril hears of Nestorius’ reluctance to speak of Mary as the Mother of God, he interprets this reluctance as truly demonstrating a failure to understand the nature of salvation itself.

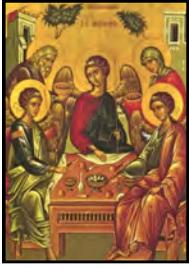
We see, accept and adore the mystery of the incarnation by faith, the mystery that the Word remains what he has always been while also simultaneously joining himself to us by becoming what we

are. Cyril writes, “this is why the mystery of Christ is truly wonderful.” Paradoxically, Cyril argues, it is the mystery and wonder of the economy that is apt to cause us to disbelieve in its reality.

**Each of us must ask ourselves: *Do I truly believe that Jesus is fully God and fully man? What is your answer?***



**CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA**



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Vol. 64 No 5      Weekend Of the Meatfare      February 3-4, 2018

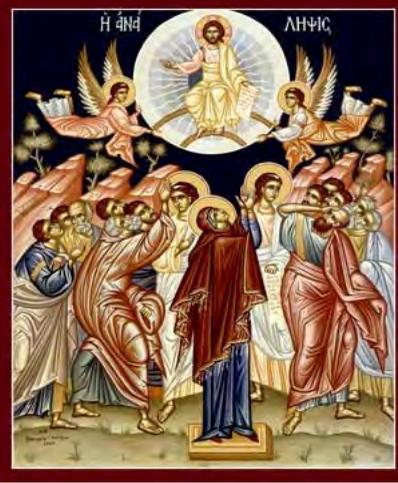
### The Spirituality of the Christian East

Some of my reading has led me to express spirituality in this way:

Spirituality is lived belief. Our beliefs structure our spirituality like skin stretched over the bones of our bodies. These beliefs start with faith in God the Father through Jesus Christ as revealed through the Holy Spirit in scripture, the church and daily life. Accordingly it begins with God, not with us. The spiritual life consists in actually living the life of the Church. Why? Because it presents us with various beliefs. Without coherent beliefs it would seem that we cannot truly be spiritual persons.

In our modern society I often hear this statement: "I'm a spiritual person but not a religious person." So what does it mean to be a spiritual person? So often it simply means that I don't belong to a particular church.

Spirituality - being a spiritual person - doesn't simply mean that I try to live a "good life" - a life that treats my fellowmen in a respectful



*Life's Journey is an Ascension to the Heavenly Father*

way. Rather, to be a spiritual person I have to base it on some sort of belief. Why be a good and selfless person?

The spirituality of the Christian East is based on our belief that God is Three-In-One and that the task of this life is to grow in His image and unto His likeness. We have a belief that the Trinity is the ultimate expression of

what it means to live in a community of love and that we are called, because we believe that Jesus was a human as well as God, to enter into that community of love. In order to do this, however, we have to desire to be a person who also loves his neighbor as himself - to be a person who sees the fulfillment of his life as learning how to unconditionally love others so that we might be unto the likeness of the God in whom we believe. What are your beliefs about life and about God? That is an important question!

## *Abundant Rewards of His Love*

We ought never to forget, beloved, that we have renounced the world. We are living here now as aliens and only for a time. When the day of our homecoming puts an end to our exile, frees us from the bonds of the world, and restores us to paradise and to a kingdom, we should welcome it. What man, stationed in a foreign land, would not want to return to his own country as soon as possible? Well, we look upon paradise as our country, and a great crowd of our loved ones awaits us there, a countless throng of parents, brothers and children longs for us to join them. Assured though they are of their own salvation, they are still concerned about ours. What joy both for them and for us to see one another and embrace! O the delight of that heavenly kingdom where there is no fear of death! O the supreme and endless bliss of everlasting life!

There is the glorious band of apostles, there, the exultant assembly of prophets, there, the innumer-

able host of martyrs, crowned for their glorious victory in combat and in death. There, in triumph, are the virgins who subdued their passions by the strength of continence. There the merciful are rewarded, those who fulfilled the demands of justice by providing for the poor. In obedience to the Lord's command, they turned their earthly patrimony into heavenly treasure.

My dear brothers, let all our longing be to join them as soon as we may. May God see our desire, may Christ see this resolve that springs from faith, for He will give the rewards of His love more abundantly to those who have longed for Him more fervently.

*St. Cyprian of Carthage*

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