

SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS



Icon of All Saints

Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend

On this first weekend after Pentecost, we are reminded that all Christians are called to be saints, that is people who have given themselves to the effort of trying to understand their relationship to God, through the Person of Jesus, and to others. Our readings are taken from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews and Matthew's Gospel.

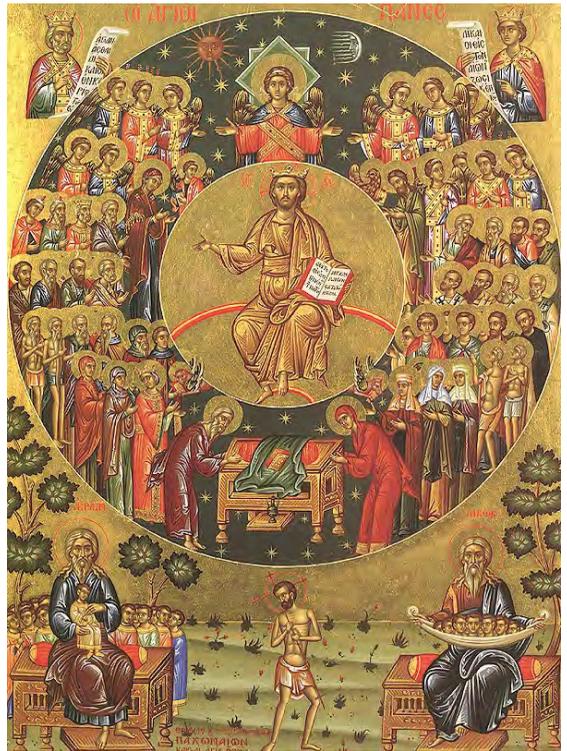
The section from Hebrew's that is used for our Epistle, talks about the faith of the Ancients. Paul writes this:

Faith is confident assurance concerning what we hope for, and conviction about things we do not see.... Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who inspires and perfects our faith.

Our Gospel reading, which is a combination of various sections from Matthew's Gospel from Chapters 10 and 19 and reads in part:

Whoever disowns me before men I will disown before my Father in heaven.... He who will not take up his cross and come after me is not worthy of me.... Many who are first shall come last, and the last shall come first.

These passages surely are very powerful and carry a very important message. They tell us, however, how we must think and behave if we want to achieve eternal life. They convey the necessity of having a certain attitude about life and to be genuine in our commitment to work during this lifetime to become more like Jesus,



the Christ. Our attitude about life, our relationship with God and other human beings IS ESSENTIAL. We know that the essential ingredient is FAITH, which means that while we cannot prove any of this, that we adhere to these thoughts and attitudes because they will lead us to become more like Jesus.

We are called to be saints. That is what this earthly life is all about. Do you understand that the meaning and purpose of this life is to actualize your God-given potential to become the human God intended - to become the person who models his/her life on the life of Jesus? How say you?

Some Thoughts About the Eucharist



The Eucharist is the sacrament (mystery) of new humanity, *par excellence*, for, as Cabasilas wrote, “alone of the mysteries it perfects the others sacraments, since they cannot fulfill their purpose without it”. What this is saying is that the Eucharist, which is the mystery that joins us in a very intimate way to Jesus Christ, is the foundation of all the sacraments. Each of the seven sacraments (*in the Eastern Church we call the seven sacraments the Holy Mysteries*) join us to Christ.

Do you, my readers, recall the seven Sacraments (*mysteries*)? First: BAPTISM. It is the mystery that says that the life that vivifies our human body is none other than God’s own Divine Life. God’s life, indeed, vivifies - brings into existence and sustains every living thing in existence - and is the source of all life in creation. All living things share in God’s life.

Second: CHRISMATION. All living things partake, to some degree, in God’s power. All living things are in the consciousness of God and are sustained by His Spirit.

Third: EUCHARIST. This is the mystery that represents our UNION with Christ. We worship God by joining with Jesus in offering our lives back to God in true and

real thanksgiving for the gift of life. We do not worship Jesus but, rather, join with Him (*because He has a human nature*) in finding a way to worship God. That way is by offering our very lives back to the Father.

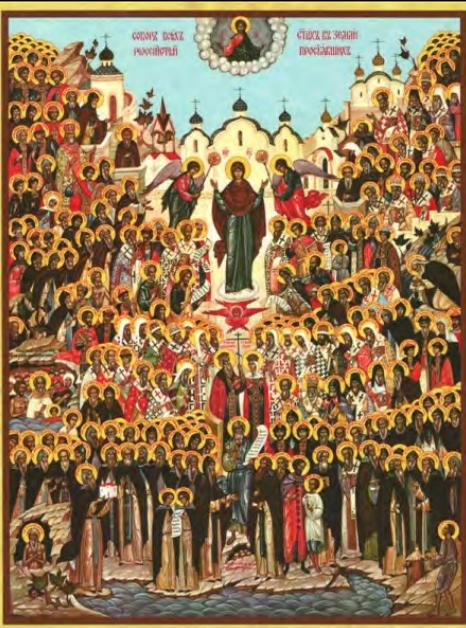
Fourth: MARRIAGE. This mystery is twofold. One, it reveals to us that God is the love force that brings people together in the intimacy of marriage. Two, it is when we learn to unconditionally love others that we can love God.

Fifth: HOLY ORDERS. This is the mystery of COMMITMENT. When we give our lives to bearing witness to God.

Sixth: REPENTANCE. This mystery helps us to understand that God loves us unconditionally and that He calls us to love Him and others in the same way. We give ourselves to this when we recognize that our own limitations are meant to help us recognize our dependence on God.

Seventh: HEALING. This mystery recognizes that sickness or illness is a part of human life. It exists so that we might place our total dependence on God and relinquish our desire to control life. God is with us even in sickness. We must accept life as it is given to us. Life is only a gift to us and doesn’t belong to us.

THOUGHTS ON ALL SAINTS



On the first weekend after the Feast of Pentecost our Church celebrates and remembers All Saints. We commemorate all of the Saints, all the Righteous, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Shepherds, Holy Monastics, Teachers, and the unknown, who have been added to the choirs of Saints from the time of Adam until the end of the world. Saints include those who have been perfected in piety and have glorified God by their holy lives - those who are recognized as having tried, during their life time, to actualize their potential to grow in their likeness of God's image, Jesus Christ. There are many who are unknown.

The veneration of the saints began with the death of the first martyrs of the Christian era. Then, before long, the cult of the New Testament saints was also extended to include persons of the Old Testament who are considered to be saints - namely people who others recognized as attempting to make God an important part of their lives.

While the veneration of the saints began with the death of the first martyrs of the Christian era, their cult in later centuries incorporated also the cult of the apostles, bishops and ascetics and religious of both sexes. Emperor Constantine the Great (+337) built a church in Constantinople in memory of the Twelve Apostles.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (+386) wrote: *We commemorate those who have fallen asleep before us, first, patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs, so that through their prayers and intercession God may receive our petition.*

Our Church Calendar dedicates each day in the year to one or more saints or classes of saints. There are multitudes of saints in heaven whose names are not recorded in the Church Calendar and whose names are unknown to the world even though they are forever inscribed in the Book of Life.

The fact of the matter is that we, who say we are followers of Jesus, are all called to be saints - people who have seen the true light and, in faith, are trying to change themselves to become more like Jesus. A saint is really anyone who decides that the goal of life is to spiritually grow and to try to become more like Jesus who is the model of what it means to be a human being.



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan

GRAVE BLESSINGS

Sunday at Holy Sepulchre at 1:00 PM

We will first meet at the mausoleum for a general Panahyda Service and then, if the weather permits, I will join those present at individual graves.

MONDAY MAY 28th



Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as *Decoration Day*, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971. Take time to offer a prayer for all those who have sacrificed their lives for our country.

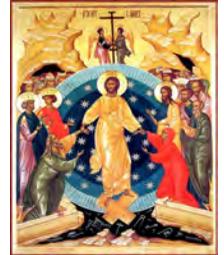
RELIGIOUS DISCUSSIONS

Look forward to the publication of the first *Religious Article* that I offer for discussion. If you want a particular topic discussed, contact me.

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail

CALLED TO HOLINESS

As I shared in the last issue of the Bulletin, my thoughts on what it means to be called to holiness are both new and old. The old ideas are quite simple: we are called to cooperate with God in actualizing our potential to become more like God's image, Jesus. Too often, however, something keeps us from do this and this is where my new ideas give insight.



If we wish to cooperate with God in becoming more like Jesus, we have to live in the PRESENT MOMENT. If we spend our time living in the PAST or the FUTURE we cannot accomplish this task.

I have learned much from reading a relatively modern writer, Eckart Tolle. He wrote a book called the Power of Now, which suggests ways that we can live in the PRESENT MOMENT instead of the PAST or FUTURE. He states that one of the most basic errors is to equate thinking with Being and identity with thinking. He states that the compulsive thinker, which means almost everyone, lives in a state of apparent separateness in an insanely complex world

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The World as Gift and Word



In this particular article I have been attempting to present the idea that the world is a gift given to us by God to express His love. This gift also conveys a message to us.

The gift of this world, if seen as God intended, is meant to serve as a bond of love between persons and not a wedge between people. The purpose of this gift, however, can be distorted by selfishness and greed, thus becoming a barrier us and others. Created things can serve either for the perfecting or the corrupting of human beings. It all depends on how we respond to and use of God's gifts.

These gifts are meant both to serve interpersonal communion and to be left behind for the sake

of that communion. The road toward God passes through our humanization. Nor can there be any advancement in this humanization except within the human community, for it consists in the bringing about of a deep interhuman communion. Hence, created things are not given to us only so that each of us can carry on a private dialogue with God; they have been given so that all of us can take part in a dialogue among ourselves and collectively take part in a dialogue with God. Put another way, this dialogue is to take place among ourselves in the consciousness that created things are given us by God so as to be used as gifts among ourselves in his name, following his command, and out of his richness - that is, as signs of His love so that this love may also extend among ourselves. Their limitation, thrown so strongly into relief in our own time, shows that the offering of gifts, the sacrifice, the cross, and the awareness of insufficiencies are no longer merely conditions for any spiritual growth toward eternal life, but also for the very possibility that human beings might live together on this earth.

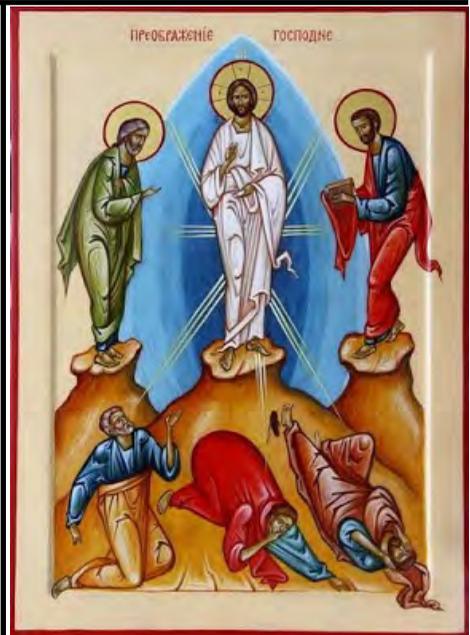
We must always remember, salvation is not achieved only because of our relationship with God since our relationship with God is quite dependent upon our relationships with others. This is why attitudes of prejudice and bigotry keep us from forming a real and genuine relationship with God. Jesus said: *Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me!*

Mysticism - A Characteristic of Our Church

In this article I have been attempting to stress one of the basic characteristics of our Church, namely its mysticism. We, as a Church, do not try to analyze how God has accomplished the things that He has, but, rather, stand in awe of His accomplishments.

As I previously shared, the belief expressed through the Council of Nicaea, was manifested in two main features: first, an emphasis on the incarnation as bridging the gulf between Creator and creature, and secondly, a deepening insistence on the fundamental unknowability of God. The Western Church, because of its use of Aristotelian philosophy, attempts to define God. The Eastern Church, because of its foundation on Platonic or Neoplatonic philosophy, expresses that fact that we can only say WHO GOD IS NOT! For example, God is not someone Who withdraws His love for His creation just because it doesn't recognize Him as the source of its existence.

St Athanasius is a convenient example of the first point, namely that God's Incarnation in the Person of Jesus bridges the gulf between God and His creation. The incarnation makes it possible for men and women to contemplate God by placing within the reach of their frail and limited powers the true consubstantial image of God, that is the Son. By the incarnation man is drawn back to contemplation of God and deified: the Word of God 'became man that we might become God'. This theology of the Image, or Icon, can be seen to underlie the logical justification of the veneration of icons in the eighth and ninth centuries. The implications of the second point, namely the unknowability of God, was most searchingly explored by St. Gregory of



Nyssa who, as many already know, was one of the Cappadocian Fathers. He stated: *If there is no natural kinship between the soul and God, then the closer the soul comes to God the greater is its convictions of God's utter knowability, the deeper the darkness it finds itself entering.*

It is important to point out that God's unknowability does not limit our ability to believe in Him. In fact it probably enhances our faith. For if we knew everything about Him we would not need faith. Faith is belief in those things we cannot prove or know.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday, May 27 - All Saints

10:00 AM - Special Intention

1:00 PM Grave Blessings at Holy Sepulchre

2nd WEEK AFTER PENTECOST

Monday May 28 - Nicetas, Bishop - Memorial Day

9:00 AM - Special Intention

Tuesday May 29 - Theodosia, Venerable-Martyr

No Service Scheduled

Wednesday, May 30 - Isaac, Venerable

8:00 AM - Special Intention

Thursday, May 31 - Hermas, Apostle, Hewrmeas, Martyr

No Service Scheduled

Friday, June 1 - Justin & Others, Martyrs

8:00 AM - Special Intention

Saturday, June 2 - Nicephor, Patriarch

No Service Scheduled

Sunday, June 3 - 2nd Weekend After Pentecost

10:00 AM - Special Intention

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

Rev. Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
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

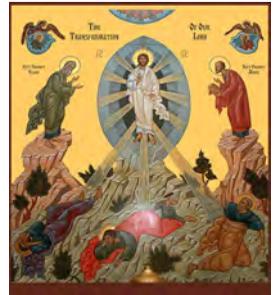
Greg & Esther Petrovich
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313.624.9867

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of continuous problems and conflict, a world that reflects the ever-increasing fragmentation of the mind. Enlightenment, which is needed for holiness, is a state of wholeness, of being "at one" and therefore at peace. At one with life in its manifested aspect, the world, as well as with your deepest self and life manifested - at one with God.

You cannot do this if you are living in the PAST or the FUTURE. In truth, enlightenment is not only the end of suffering and of continuous conflict within and without, but also the end of the dreadful enslavement to incessant thinking. Living in the PRESENT MOMENT means that we can encounter what is truly reality!



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Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

I ended this article with the statement that new cities were founded in the 12th century, one being Lviv. As a result trade opened especially with Poland, Hungary and Byzantium. This brought with it considerable prosperity. Culture flourish with marked new influences from the West. In 1253 Danylo (*in a bid for aid from the West*) even accepted the royal crown from Pope Innocent IV and recognized him as head of the church, although nothing substantial came from this. Danylo's reign also witnessed the rise of boyar-magnate unrest, debilitating dynastic involvements with Poland and Hungary, and the Mongol invasion of 1240-41. These marked the onset of Galicia-Volhynia's decline, which continued until the extinction of Roman Mstyslavych's dynasty in 1340.

By the middle of the 14th century, Ukrainian territories were under the rule of three external powers - the Golden Horde, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the kingdom of Poland. The steppe and Crimea, whose coastal towns and maritime trade were now in the hands of the Venetians and Genoese, formed part of the direct domains of the Tatar Golden Horde. This was the westernmost successor of Genghis Kahn's Mongol empire, whose khan resided at Sarai on the Volga River. By the mid-15th century the Golden Horde was in a process of disintegration. One of its



successor states was the Crimean khanate, which after 1475 accepted the suzerainty of the sultans of the Ottoman Empire. Both the Crimean Peninsula and large areas of the adjoining steppe continued under the khanate's rule until its annexation to the Russian Empire in 1783.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, Mongol rule was largely indirect, limited to exactions of taxes and tribute whose collection was delegated to the local princes. It was also relatively short-lived; northwestern and central Ukraine became an arena of expansion for a new power that had arisen in the 13th century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Having already, over the course of a century, incorporated all the lands of Belarus, Lithuania under Grand Duke Algirdas advanced rapidly into Ukraine. In the 1350s Chernihiv and adjacent areas - and in the 1360s the regions of Kiev and, to its south, Pereyaslav and Podolia were occupied by Lithuania.

If we understand the history of Ukraine we understand the various cultural influences that helped form the resultant culture.

THE POWER OF METANOIA (REPENTANCE)

As we celebrate the feast of All Saints and think about the fact that we have been called to be saints, it is fitting that we think about “Metanoia”. This is the process the Church suggests which can lead to saintliness. Thus I will be sharing ideas about this topic, *metanoia*, during the coming weeks.

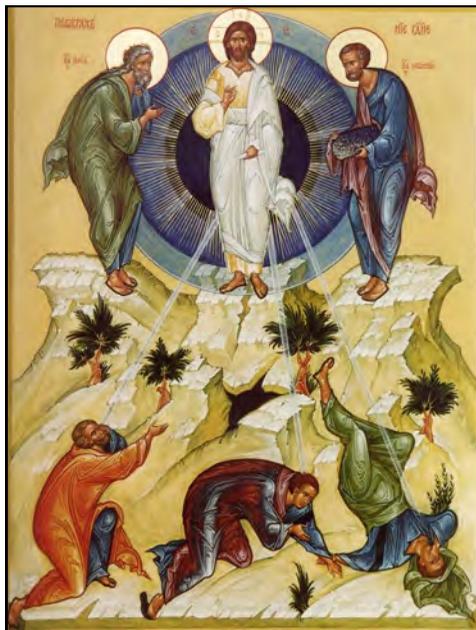
That we are all in need of personal change is beyond dispute, as this is clearly indicated at the beginning of the Gospel, in the very first words preached by both St. John the Baptizer and Christ Himself: *Change your heart and mind (repent): for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand*. This also appears at the end of the Gospel of Luke where the Lord commissions His disciples saying: *repentance and the remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning in Jerusalem*.

So the question that needs to be addressed at the outset of my thoughts on this fundamentally crucial theme is: *What is repentance (metanoia) and how does it bring about our personal renewal?* It is not about doing “acts of penance” for

things that I may have done which can be considered wrong.

Repentance, says St. John of the Ladder, *is the renewal of baptism*. We know from Holy Scripture and our life in the Church that baptism means dying to the old man and being raised together with Christ in newness of life. As St. Paul says in his letter to the Romans: *Are you not aware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Through baptism into His death we were buried with him, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live as new life (6:3-4)*.

So if, as St. John of the Ladder teacher us, repentance is the renewal of baptism, then it too must signify the renewal of the very same death and resurrection in Christ that we receive at baptism. But what exactly is this kind of death, and what is this kind of resurrection? Indeed the short answer, as Paul maintains, is *that death which sets us free from sin, for he that is dead is freed from sin*. The next question I shall attempt to answer is: *how do we die to sin?*





THE EASTERN HERALD

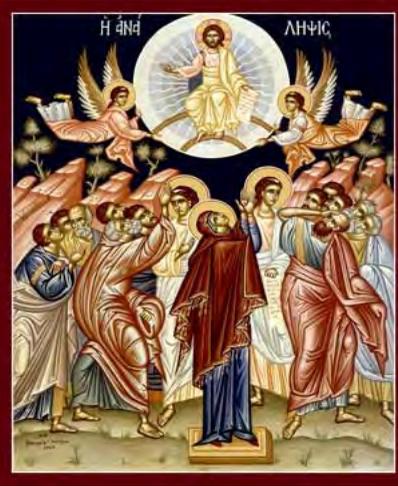
СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 64 No 21 Weekend of All Saints May 26-27, 2018

The Spirituality of the Christian East

As I stated in the last issue of this article, our Byzantine Christian spirituality asserts that humans are being guided toward one goal: deification! This is what we know as salvation. Inasmuch as evil is not a factor that operates always in the same fashion in order to keep the world steadily within a weakened state that was introduced within it, so neither is the

providence that preserves the world merely a constant countervailing action that keeps the world going with all its enduring erosion. Through the new initiatives of the evil spirits and of humans influenced by them, evil strives to maintain itself in new forms in the world and stamp itself deeper and deeper upon the world in the hope of destroying it completely. God's Providence, too, however, is always new in the ways it adapts to preserve and protect the world, making use of both its own forces and the good



Life's Journey Is an Ascension to the Heavenly Father

deeds of humans, whether they latter are supporting the good invariably or only intermittently. Through the multiplication of human beings as factors of good and evil, always original but endowed with memory of the past, God is leading the world toward ever new phases.

As I have shared with my readers in the past,

deification (*theosis*) is a cooperative act between God and man. If man seeks to cooperate with God, then the movement is always toward greater and greater union with God, which then becomes the transformative state of deification.

Thus by God's providence, whose main task is preservation, the world is being led forward. In other words, it is hard to distinguish between the providence that acts to preserve and the providence that acts to lead.

More to come.

Their Death is More like Dreaming

We ought to honor the saints. They are Christ's friends, children and heirs of God. This is the teaching of the theologian and evangelist John: 'To all who received him ... the Word gave power to become children of God' (John 1:12). The Creator of all things is called in Scripture Lord of lords, King of kings, God of gods. The saints are precisely lords, kings and gods, not in their own nature but because they have become lords over themselves, they have ruled their passions, they have kept intact that image of God in which they were created. Indeed, the saints of their own choice are united to God, they have welcomed Him as a guest in their hearts, and by sharing with Him have become what He is by nature.

They have become God's servants, friends and children. The honor given to His faithful ser-

vants of which they are the witness is a test of our love for our Lord and theirs. He has found in them a spotless dwelling place and has performed his promise: 'I will make my abode among you ... and I will walk among you and will be your God' (Lev. 26:11-12).

It is of the saints that Scripture says: 'The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God and the torment of death shall not touch them' (Wisd. 3:1). In fact, their death is more like dreaming than dying. God is life and light, and those who are in the hand of God are themselves life and light. By means of the Spirit, God is dwelling in the bodies of the saints. Why then should we not honor the temple of the living God?

St. John of Damascus