

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Christ Healing the Centurion's Servant

REFLECTIONS ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this 4th weekend after Pentecost, our readings continue to be taken from Paul's Letter to the Romans and St. Matthew's Gospel. Both provide us with important insights about how to live this present life.

Paul's insight into living this life is based on his understanding that the *wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*. The key words for me are: *the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*. This clearly presents Paul's belief that if we make an attempt to live like Jesus lived, we will inherit eternal life - the fullness of life will be ours.

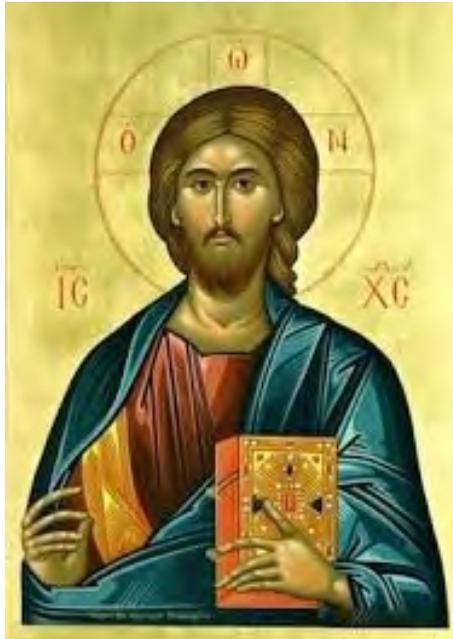
The miracle story that we hear from St. Matthew's Gospel is that of the cure of the Centurion's Servant.

There are important aspects about this miracle story. First, Jesus offers to go to the Centurion's home to cure the servant. Normally a Jew would not enter the house of a Gentile since he would incur ritual uncleanness.

Second, the great humility and faith of the Centurion is highlighted by Matthew. He is quoted as responding to Jesus' willingness to go to his home and help his servant by saying: *I am*

not worthy to have you under my roof. Just give an order and my boy will get better.

This story is not found in Mark's Gospel and there are variations between the versions of Matthew and Luke. A comparison of Matthew and Luke shows Matthew's customary technique of abbreviating narratives.



The climatic line in both versions is the centurion's belief that Jesus need only speak, a visit and personal contact are unnecessary. The answer of Jesus is the first saying in Matthew that contrasts the unbelief of the Jews with the faith of the uninstructed Gentiles. Up until this point in Matthew's narrative, the unbelief of the Jews has not yet

appeared.

The theme of the story is faith - a faith that sets no conditions. The choice of a Gentile to illustrate this faith is certainly deliberate. It sets a tone that Matthew maintains in the rest of his Gospel. The faith of the Gentiles gives them the title of the true Israel which the Jews have forfeited by unbelief in Jesus, the true Messiah.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE EUCHARIST

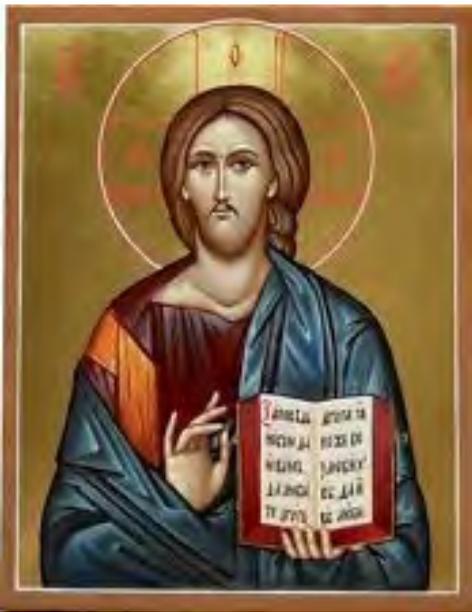
Although this may seem repetitious, I would hasten to once again assert that the last word on the Eucharist, in Byzantine theology, is thus an anthropological and soteriological understanding of the mystery. In approaching the Eucharist, the Byzantines began not with bread *qua* bread, but with bread *qua* man. Bread and wine are offered only because Christ has assumed humanity, and they are being *changed* and deified by the operation of the Spirit because Christ's humanity has been transformed into glory through the cross and Resurrection. This is the thought of Cabasilas and the meaning of the Epiclesis in the canon of John Chrysostom: *Moreover, we offer to You this spiritual and unbloody sacrifice, and we implore, pray and entreat You: send down Your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts lying before us and make this bread the precious Body of Your Christ and that which is in this chalice the precious Blood of Your Christ, changing them by Your Holy Spirit that to those who partake of them, they may be for the purification of the soul, for the remission of sins, for the communion of Your Holy Spirit, for the fullness of the heavenly kingdom, for confidence in You and not for judgment or condemnation.*

Think about the meaning of these words. As a divine-human communication and "synergy," the



Eucharist is a prayer addressed "in Christ" to the Father, and accomplished through the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Epiclesis is the fulfillment of the Eucharistic action, just as Pentecost is the fulfillment of a divine "economy" of salvation. Salvation is always a Trinitarian action. The Spirit-filled dimension of the Eucharist is also presupposed in the very notion of "synergy". It is the Spirit which makes Christ present in the age between His two comings: when divine action is not imposing itself on humanity but offering itself for acceptance by human freedom and communicating itself to man, making him authentically free. At all times, Byzantine theologians have understood the Eucharist not simply as a change of bread and wine but, rather at the center of the mystery and action of salvation. It is the mystery wherein God and man meet in a true and mystical way. It is, however, only accomplished by the Church - that is the gathering of those who believe that Christ is the true Savior and Messiah.

ACQUIRING THE MIND OF CHRIST



One Father of our Church said: *the Divine Liturgy is truly a heavenly service upon earth, during which God Himself, in a particular, immediate, and most close manner, is present and dwells with men, being Himself the invisible celebrant of the service, offering and being offered.*

It is through the Liturgy that we learn how to live a spiritual life, for it shows us a pattern of how to take this world and to offer it up in an *Anaphora* (a Greek word (ἀναφορά) meaning a *carrying back* or an *offering*), invoking the Holy Spirit on everyone, everything, and every situation. This in turn grants the possibility of

everything in our personal world of becoming eucharistic, an encounter with God, a point of contact and not a separation. Our main task as liturgical beings is to take our world and re-connect it to God in thanksgiving - to make it eucharistic.

The first-created man demonstrated how humans can sever the tie of this world from God (*when he began to use the world apart from God for its own sake*). He became the first official “consumer”. We, on the other hand, knowing of this possibility because of our free will, must make sure in our own lives that we reconnect this world and our lives back to the source of all: Christ, the Life-giver and Creator.

If the Liturgy of the Church can permeate every part of our life, we will no longer be consumers but, rather communicants, the world becoming a window and a mirror for us to see the invisible and almighty power of God.

The saving works of the God-man Jesus Christ (e.g., the Incarnation, the Cross, the Tomb, the Resurrection and the Ascension) have passed into, and are now manifested within the sacramental life of the Church. According to St. Leo the Great, this sacramental liturgical worship is the primary revelation and entrance into these saving acts for the world.

To acquire the mind of Christ, we must draw upon the actions of Christ which are part and parcel of the Divine Liturgy. The Liturgy highlights His actions. If we join ourselves to these actions we will begin to understand the mind of Christ and, then, be able to imitate Him.



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



I would offer a special prayer on this Father's Day that Almighty God would bless all fathers and men of our parish family with health, happiness and length of days.

Многая літа – Mnohaya lita God Grant You Many Years

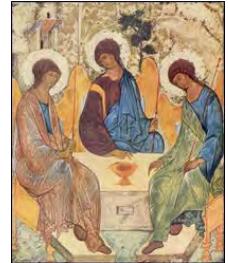
ADULT DISCUSSION GROUP

Several weeks ago I made available two articles. I thought that it was important to take into consideration also what Pope Francis had to say since he had been quoted as sharing some opinions on the same topic. I shall schedule a discussion session upon the return of Len Mier since he had some very salient ideas about the topic. Date will be announced.

*If you really want to do something you'll find a way,
if you don't you'll find an excuse*

CALLED TO HOLINESS

The call to holiness, as I see it, is a call to recognize and believe that the life-force that you experience within you is none-other-than God Himself bringing you and sustaining you in existence. Holiness becomes real when we sense our connection to God. The fact that we believe that Jesus is truly God and Man, links humanity directly to God. Jesus is God's revelation about what is true about humankind.

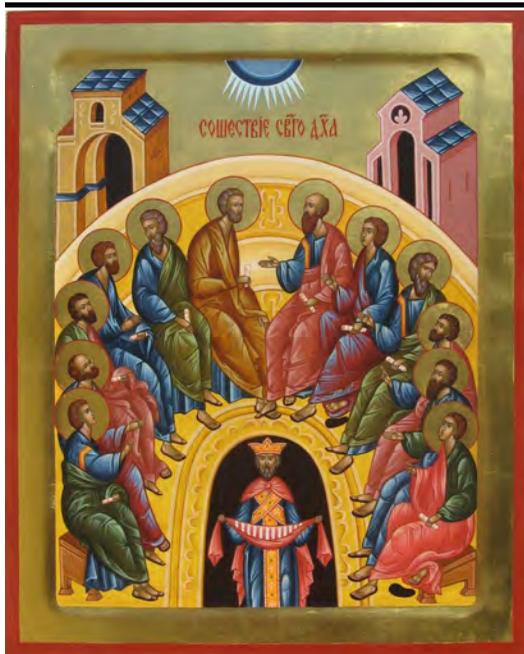


The recognition and belief of this profound truth, opens the door to the true development of holiness. It also speaks to the meaning and purpose of human life. It is the foundation upon which we can truly embrace *metanoia*, that is personal transformation. It is the foundation for our belief that human life is sacred.

One of the truly sad aspects of our modern world appears to be the true loss of the idea of the sacredness of human life. The daily news about murders, suicides, abortions, wars and terrorist attacks, tells us that many in our world do not see human life as sacred.

(Continued on page 8)

THE WORLD AS GIFT AND WORD



I wonder whether you, my readers, are making sense of these thoughts on the “world” as a “gift” and “word” from God. When you think about God’s creation, you realize that He created the world and universe as a means to help us grow in our likeness of Jesus. The world presents the appropriate support for our growth. The types of unique challenges it presents us are exactly what we need to grow. Further, as we live in this world created for us, we come to know more and more about God Himself and about this life that we share. Think about it. If you look around our world, you discover so very much about God and yourself.

Further, if you look at our world

you come to realize what true beauty is and it provides us also an opportunity to expand our intelligence. When I think about all the different things that have been discovered since I was born, I am truly amazed.

Both the understanding and application of the rationality of nature through the agency of a conscious subject as well as the fact that this latter can discover in nature meanings that serve his own spiritual growth depend upon this rationality being brought into the light and turned to better and better account. The rationality of the world reveals a meaning of its own through the fact that it is made complete by the rationality of the human subject who is also conscious of an inexhaustible wealth that is no monotonous repetition. This rationality is one that reveals, selects, and pursues higher and higher goals and advances toward these goals by making use of nature itself, not in monotonous repetition but by a continually new understanding of things, by a free choice of new ways among the multiplicity of those already known and by new applications of the natural laws in pursuit of more and more useful results. Though enriched thought and common work characterized by an increasingly marked responsibility applied to nature, humans rise to ever higher levels of understanding nature and in communing with one another. Our world was not just an accident. It was designed by God to support our spiritual growth efforts.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY - WHO IS GOD?

To address the issue of the Holy Trinity and Who God is, we must first start with “Who is Christ?” At the heart of Christianity is the cross and the One who was executed on it: the Lord Jesus Christ. But who was this man? The earliest witnesses to Jesus, which we find in the Gospels, and the rest of the New Testament, make all sorts of suggestions: a prophet, ‘The Prophet’, Son of Man, Son of God, Word of God, the Wisdom and Power of God. The Gospels present Jesus as a teacher and a wonderworker, who came to be considered (*in ways not really explored in the Gospels, save for his opposition to these called ‘Pharisees’*) a threat: a threat to the Jewish religion, in some sense and beyond that a political threat (*that he was crucified makes clear that the execution was performed by the Roman occupiers of Palestine*).

But how did Jesus think of himself? In what way did he want to be remembered? As a prophet and teacher, he preached; parables seem to have characterized his teaching. But what did he teach? There is not a great deal in his teaching that cannot be paralleled in contemporary or earlier Jewish teaching. Even the twofold command - to love God and to love one’s neighbor - is presented in Luke’s Gospel, not as Jesus’ teaching, but a summary of the Law provided by a Jewish lawyer in answer to Jesus’ question. Jesus is not presented as a great teacher with a new message: he speaks with a new authority, but what he preaches is the message of the Law and the Prophets. Jesus is not a philosopher with some new interpretation of the universe, nor is he presented as a moral teacher with a new moral code, though it is true that love is



central to the way he presented his teaching, and this is echoed in the apostolic witness to Christ - not least in the presentation of Jesus in the Gospel of St. John and in the letters of St. Paul.

This sense that Jesus cannot be summed up in his teaching, whether moral or philosophical, is underlined by the fact that he wrote nothing himself; though this aligns him with another mysterious person, this time in the Greek tradition, Socrates. But in two ways Jesus gave his disciples something to remember him by: the Lord’s Prayer and, of course, the Eucharist. This seems to be significant in understanding our God!

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday, June 17 - 4th Weekend After Pentecost - Tone 3
10:00 AM - All Living & Deceased Fathers of the Parish

5th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 4

Monday June 18 - Leontius, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Tuesday June 19 - Jude, Apostle
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Wednesday, June 20 - Methodius, Bishop-Martyr
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Thursday, June 21 - Julian, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Friday, June 22 - Eusebius, Bishop-Martyr
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Saturday, June 23 - Agrippina, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

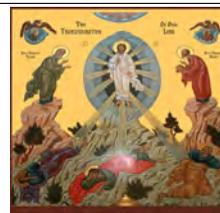
Sunday, June 24 - 5th Weekend After Pentecost - Tone 4
Birth of John the Baptizer
10:00 AM - Special Intention

(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)

If we truly recognize and believe human life - our life - is sacred, than we will do all in our power to do several things: (1) work to actualize our potential to become more like Christ, the image of God; (2) embrace the challenges of life as opportunities to facilitate this growth in God's likeness; (3) be mindful to base our responses to all others on the way that Jesus did; and (4) not allow the behaviors of others to dictate how we respond to all the experiences and events in our lives.

If we live in this manner, then our faith and our beliefs begin to truly be integrated into our lives. This takes, of course, work, reflection and prayer.

We are all called to holiness!



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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

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

UNDERSTANDING OUR UKRAINIAN GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH

As I ended this article in the last Bulletin, I highlighted the fact that tensions resulted from Polish rule. These were exacerbated by the fact that, while the peasants were Ukrainian and Orthodox, the landlords were largely Polish and Roman Catholic, and the estate stewards or leaseholders for absentee proprietors frequently were Jewish. Thus, social discontent tended to coalesce with national and religious grievances.

Religious developments

As social conditions among the Ukrainian population in Lithuania and Poland progressively deteriorated, so did the situation of the Ruthenian church. The Roman Catholic Church, steadily expanding eastward into Ukraine, enjoyed the support of the state and legal superiority over the Orthodox. External pressures and restrictions were accompanied by a serious internal decline in the Ruthenian church. From the mid-16th century, both Catholicism, newly reinvigorated by the Counter-Reformation and the arrival of Jesuits in Poland, and Protestantism (albeit temporarily) made inroads, especially among the Ruthenian nobility.

Attempts to revive the fortunes of the Ruthenian church gathered strength in the last decades of the 16th century. About 1580 Prince Konstantyn Ostrozky founded at Ostroh in Volhynia a cultural center that included an academy and



a printing press and attracted leading scholars of the day; among its major achievements was the publication of the first complete text of the Bible in Slavonic. Lay brotherhoods, established by burghers in Lviv and other cities, maintained churches, supported school and printing presses, and promoted charitable activities. The brotherhoods were frequently in conflict with the Orthodox hierarchy, however, on questions of authority over their institutions and clerical reforms.

Religious developments took a radical turn in 1596 when, at a synod in Brest, the Kievan metropolitan and the majority of bishops signed an act of union with Rome. By this act the Ruthenian church recognized papal primacy but retained the Eastern rite and the Slavonic liturgical language, as well as its administrative autonomy and traditional discipline, including a married clergy.

This history testifies to the struggle of our Church in Ukraine before the first immigration of Ukrainians to the United States and other parts of the world. It influenced the founding of our Church in this country.

THE POWER OF METANOIA (REPENTANCE)

I have been sharing ideas about the Eastern Christian idea of *metanoia*. Unfortunately the English word that has been used to represent this idea, truly lacks a clear understanding of the real meaning of *metanoia*. *Metanoia* is an active process of changing our ideas and thoughts about life and supporting the process of changing our behaviors.

Even though we know the importance of changing our way of thinking and our attitudes, yet we resist the challenge of Christ's first call to *metanoia*, because we fear that we shall in some way lose our freedom. In truth "true freedom" comes to him, says St. John of the Ladder, who "voluntarily delivers himself into servitude" - servitude, that is, to God.

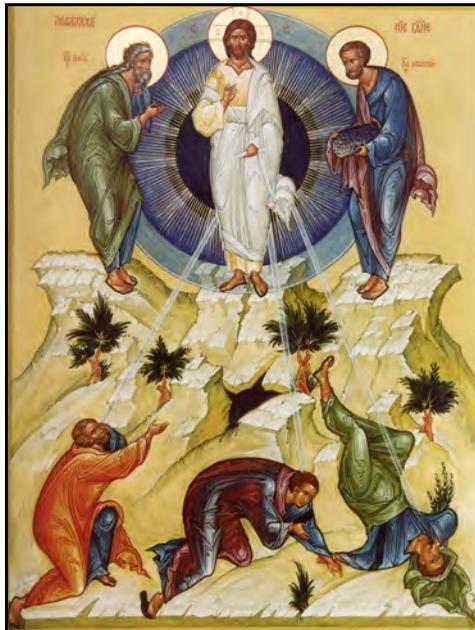
Based on the tradition of the Fathers, we can say that there are two basic ways by which one may arrive at the realization that a fundamental change of life must take place. First, there is what we might be allowed to call the "way of light," and second, there is what we may be allowed to term the "way of darkness." By the "way of light", then we refer to such

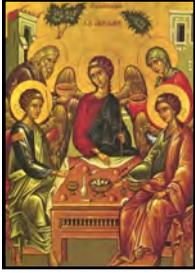
exceptionally rare occasions as when Christ Himself appears to His creature in His uncreated divine glory, and recognizing thereby how far we stand from what we have been called to become, we cannot but react by beseeching Him to save us and help us to change.

By the "way of darkness" we refer to the more common way by which the chasm that divides us from Christ is revealed to us. God, in His mercy, allows us to see ourselves as we really are. He allows us to come to the realization that without Him we cannot do or even think any good thing.

And the soul, seeing this, begins to cry out for help, asking Christ to enlighten, to illumine our darkened soul.

It should be emphasized here that both of these "ways" are a gift from God, and as such are the result of His saving uncreated grace operating in our lives. In order to respond, however, to either of these ways, we have to give ourselves to self-reflection and develop a desire to grow in our awareness of God actively working to save us.





THE EASTERN HERALD

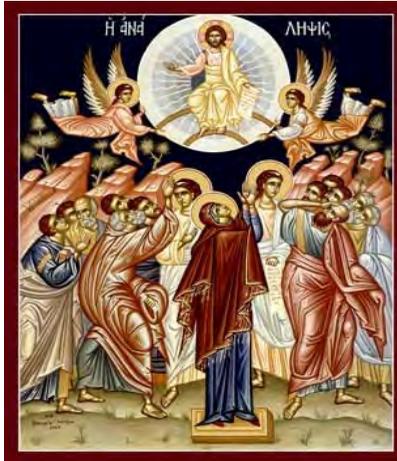
СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 64 No 24 4th Weekend After Pentecost June 16-17, 2018

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

It is our belief that God's Providence is leading forward the deification of the world. This is being accomplished in collaboration with the world. God is actively involved in bringing this about, even through it may take all eternity to accomplish. What is important, however, is that God is leading His creation in this true direction. Why, you may ask? Because He has joined Himself to His creation and it is His consciousness that keeps His creation in existence. It is through synergic providence that God brings matter up to that phase in which the human being can be created and given his place in the world. The very act of bringing more and more humans into existence is itself a further creative work of God and goes beyond merely guiding the world toward the goal of perfection in communion with Him. Supernatural revelation, which is comprised not only of a teaching that comes from God, but also in acts, leads

to levels in the raising up of the human person that are essentially new and transcend those of nature. This action of opening certain essentially new levels and of leading humankind toward them also enters into the framework of providence, which is identified here with the plan of salvation and deification of the world.



Life's Journey is an Ascension to

Our Eastern Christian teaching holds that divine providence plays a large role in the progress of history through the agency of these new levels that God opens up to the conscious creature, as also by His leading creation toward them and raising it up to reach them.

This is a totally different approach from Western Christian spirituality. If you think in this way, that your deification is what God is attempting to accomplish through your being in His creation, you begin to look at life in a different manner. We are called to cooperate with God's providence!

Nowhere in Israel Have I Found as Much Faith

The Lord Jesus agreed to go to the centurion's house to cure his servant, but he replied: *I am not worthy to have you under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed.* In protesting his unworthiness the centurion showed himself worthy to have Christ enter not his house but his heart. Yet he could not have said this with such faith and humility unless he already bore within his heart the One he was too overawed to have within his house. In any case, there would have been no great happiness at the entry of the Lord Jesus within his walls if he were not present in his heart.

But what emboldened the centurion to act as he did? *I am under authority myself,* he said, *and have soldiers under me; and I say to one man, Go, and*

he goes; to another, Come here, and he comes; to my servant, Do this, and he does it.

Now the man who said this was a Gentile as well as a centurion. He was a professional soldier and, as a centurion, acted according to his rank: subject to authority and exercise in authority, obeying as a subordinate and giving orders to those subordinate to him. As for the Lord, though living among the Jewish people, He was already beginning to make it known that His Church would extend throughout the whole world into which He was about to send His apostles. Although the Gentiles would not see him they would believe in him, whereas the Jewish leaders who saw him would put him to death.

St. Augustine of Hippo