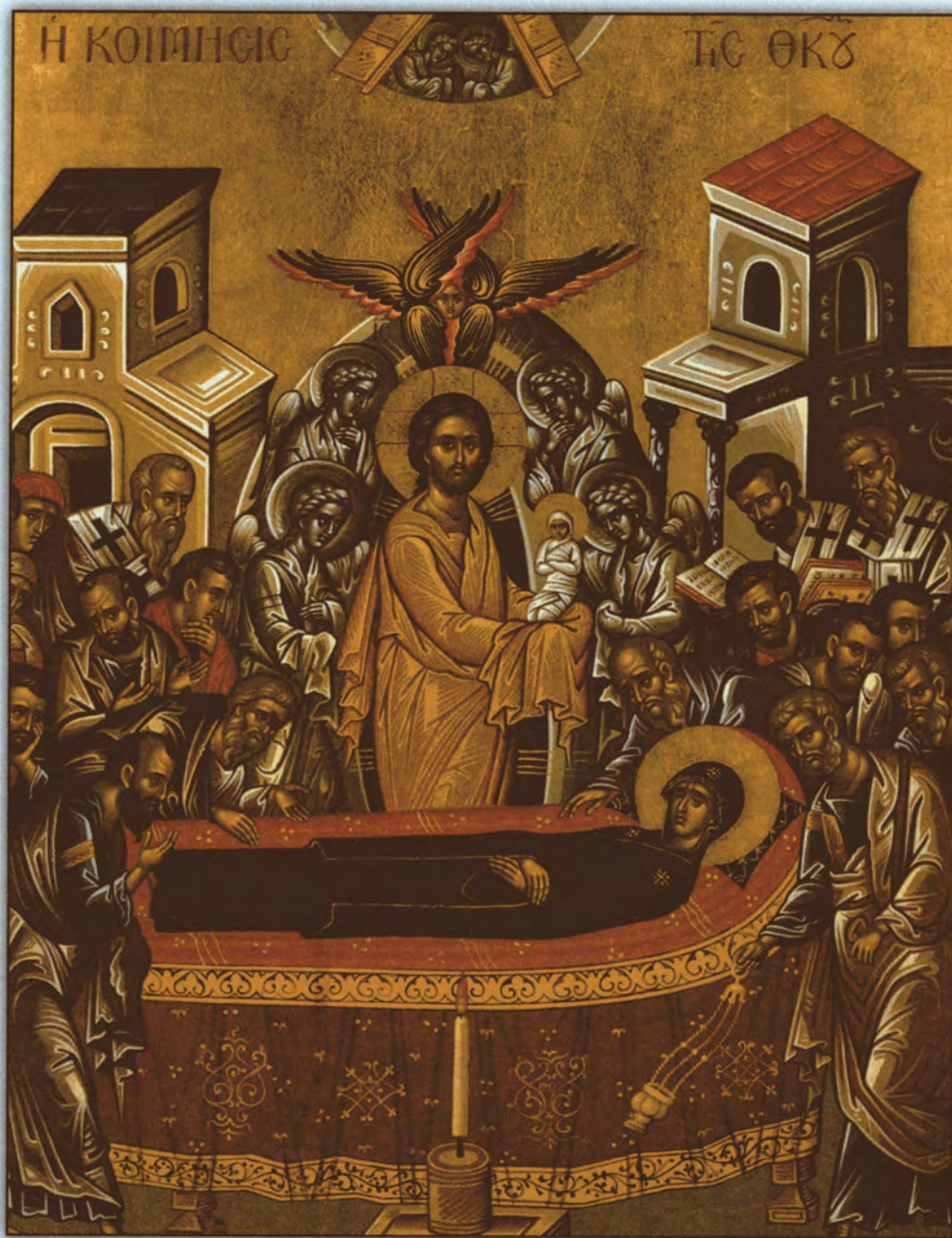


TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos -- August 15th

REFLECTIONS ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this 12th weekend after Pentecost, we also celebrate the feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord. This great feast truly emphasizes that we are called to *personal transformation*. That is the purpose of this present earthly existence. God's plan for us is to enter into a deeper communion with Him by learning how to **TRUST** and **UNCONDITIONALLY LOVE TO OTHERS**. As we increase our ability to do these two things, we change - we accomplish personal transformation to the extent possible.

One of the important aspects of this feast is that it reveals to us that God's **LIFE-FORCE** animates or vivifies us. We see this in the great white light that the apostles saw in Jesus. We must always remember, that Jesus was *transfigured* as a MAN on Mount Tabor, revealing God's life and Spirit within Him. Our Eastern Church emphasizes that the purpose of earthly life is seize upon the opportunities that it provides us to increase our ability to live like Jesus lived since He is truly the model of what God intended when He created humanity.

Do you understand that what God is calling you to do during this earthly life-time is to *personally change the way you think and behave* so that you may truly become God's child - truly become more like Jesus? Human life does have a purpose! Its purpose is not to be happy, despite what our



society says. Happiness is fleeting. We are called to truly understand the *meaning* and *purpose* of life. Have you ever thought about why you are here on earth and why humans were even created?

When you search the universe you find that everything created has a specific purpose (*although I know that I sometimes wonder about bugs, especially mosquitoes*). All created things have a purpose for being in existence. We only have to find the purpose.

So as we celebrate this great feast, let us make a personal commitment to *transformation* - applying ourselves to do everything in our power to become more like Jesus.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE EUCHARIST



Thousands of books have been written, from all possible points of view, on *memory*, this mysterious gift given to man. However much man strives to understand and explain its meaning and 'mechanism,' the gift of memory remains ultimately inexplicable, mysterious and even ambiguous.

One thing is without doubt: memory is man's capacity to 'resurrect the past', to preserve knowledge of it within himself.

In the biblical Old Testamental teaching on God, the term memory refers to the attentiveness of God to His creation, the power of divine providential love, through which God "holds" the world and *gives it life*, so that life itself can be termed abiding in the memory of God, and death the falling out of this memory. In order words, memory, like everything else in God, is *real*, it is that life that he grants, that God *remembers*; it is the eternal overcoming of the "nothing" out of which God called us into "his wonderful light."

This gift of memory, as the power

that transforms love into life, into knowledge, communion and unity, has been given to man by God. Man's memory is his responding love for God, the encounter and communion with God, with the life of life itself. Out of all creation it is given to man alone to *remember* God and through this remembrance to truly live. If everything in the world witnesses to God, declares his glory and renders him praise, then only man "remembers" him and, through this memory, through this living knowledge of God, comprehends the world the world as God's world, receives it from God and raises it up to God. To God's remembrance of him, man answers with his remembrance of God. If God's remembrance of man is the gift of life, then man's remembrance of God is the reception of this life-creating gift, the constant *acquisition* of and increase in life.

Our Eucharist is a "remembering" - making real - God's gift of life to us and the universe. We use the Greek word *ANAMNESIS* - a true and active remembering - to designate what we do in order to "worship" our God. This means that we have to remember what Jesus did: *the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand, and the second and glorious coming again*. In doing this, we are reminded to offer thanks to God for the gift of life.

ACQUIRING THE MIND OF CHRIST



In “acquiring the mind of Christ,” we must remember that **today** is the day of salvation, and we must never put off prayer for another time. Every moment is the moment to turn to the Lord, to thank the Lord for all His innumerable benefits, to beseech aid from on high, to repent and ask for forgiveness, and to ask His blessing. The most essential part of prayer is the inner turning of the heart to the Lord. This we must learn to do anywhere and at anytime.

The classic textbook definition of prayer given by St. Theophan the Recluse is “standing with the mind in the heart before the Lord.” It is imperative that, as we pray, our

attention remains in our heart as much as possible. As our attention wanders, we simply bring it back to the heart and to the words of the prayer.

Another essential key to this new life of prayer is learning to *listen* to God. God is always speaking to us but we are often so busy monologuing with ourselves that we may not be able to hear Him. It is important that we not only approach prayer as union with God but also with a receptive listening heart, waiting on the Lord like the Prophet Samuel: “Yes, Lord, your servant is listening. This means that we cultivate silence and watchfulness in our prayer time so that it is not just filled with our requests; we make room to hear from the Lord His requests from us.

We usually find the Lord’s requests conveyed to us by way of inspirations or thoughts that inspire us. When we try to listen to the Lord, He speaks to us in very subtle ways - inspirations and thoughts of what we should do. It truly always happens if we open our hearts and minds to the Lord. It is not that the ideas come from God as we can perceive, but we have a sense of what we should do.

However, He wont’s always speak to us in the manner in which we might expect. Sometimes it may be a verse from Scripture, a verse from the Fathers, a sense in our own heart of intuition or conscience, or just the peace of God. If we are open to God’s communication, we will not doubt that He speaks to us. An idea. A thought. A sense of what is important. It only means that we open our hearts and minds to Him.



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan

OUR FESTAL CELEBRATIONS

Today, Sunday August 12th

Although the actual feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord was celebrated last Monday, because it is within the octave of the feast, we celebrate it today as a Parish.

FEAST OF THE DORMITION

Wednesday, August 15th

7:00 Liturgy

Sunday August 19th

*Parish Celebration of the
Dormition of the Mother of God*

Flowers will be blessed at
both celebrations

ADULT DISCUSSION GROUP

Sunday September 2nd

I presented an article for our Adult Discussion Group. It is about what the meaning of Christ's death on the Cross. The Eastern Church has a much different approach to this topic. This is one instance where we differ from the Western Roman Catholicism.

***Very little is needed to make a happy life;
it is all within yourself,
in your way of thinking***

CALLED TO HOLINESS

The lie that has convinced so many Christians that holiness isn't possible is easy to disprove. It saddens me that we don't teach and reteach every Christian



how to overcome this debilitating lie. And the devastating truth is that it can be disproven in just a couple of pages. Though it would be even better if we taught every Christian that holiness is possible with such clarity, and reminded them so often, that the lie would never have a chance to take root. But the lie is deeply rooted itself in our Christian communities and in our society. Of course this is why I have been writing this article each and every week. I want all of my readers to truly and absolutely believe that they can obtain holiness. Why? Because God, I believe, is calling all of us to be saints - people who truly understand the meaning and purpose of life.

How can this be achieved? By trying each day to create just one single "HOLY MOMENT." A holy moment is a moment when you truly open yourself to God and forget all the things of this world. *(Continued on page 8)*

THE WORLD AS GIFT AND WORD



My intent in sharing this article with my readers is to, hopefully, create a great awareness that all of creation is to help us humans come to know God. Creation is also meant to also help us come to know ourselves. God in His great wisdom, fashioned all of creation to help us desire and work to grow in our relationship with Him - to, in truth, accomplish a greater union with Him and others.

I realize that, at times, this article probably has been rather esoteric. I don't think that many people see how we humans are intimately connected with the universe and all creation. I think that if we did, we would treat our environment with greater respect and not just use it for our benefit. Our environment is sacred. It is the "word" of God to us. Therefore we

must hold it as sacred and not feel that we can just use it in any way that we want.

According to our faith, when God created things as the molded material and sensible forms of his own reasons, at the same time he provided the human person with reason as the organ whereby the human person was to come to know them. It could be said, therefore, that the human person has what might even be the duty before God to come to know this created work at the level of the capacity human reason possesses to grasp it, for this work is the very thing in view of which God created the human person as one endowed with a reason adequate to creation. On the other hand, the human person is obliged to know these reasons of things, for otherwise he cannot make use of them nor live among them in a manner that will promote his/her spiritual growth. But precisely so that the human person can live and use them, created things possess a certain permanency within the solidarity of their own inner structures or reasons, a permanency corresponding to the permanency of the human reason, which depends on them.

At the same time, the human person makes use of his reason to adapt created things to his many and constantly changing needs. He find more and more ways in which these things may conform to his own needs, and in this very process he discovers more and more of the world's harmonies and of its further beauties and dimensions.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY - WHO IS GOD?

I ended this article in the last issue by saying that “it is the Son’s prayer to the Father that makes clear the distinction - the *personal* distinction - between the Father and the Son.

But there is a dual character to the Son’s prayer to the Father, for the Son prays to the Father both as God the Son and as the Incarnate Son: his prayer allows us to glimpse something of the nature both of the relationship within the Divine Trinity as Christ prays to the Father as his Son, and of his relationship to us as Christ prays to God the Father, as the Son, the “firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29). There is one person praying - the Incarnate Son of God (*there is no separate human person*) - but his prayer expresses a dual filial relationship: the relationship of the Son to the Father within the Trinity and the relationship of the human sonship that God the Son assumed in the Incarnation, a relationship into which we are incorporated by the adoption as sons and daughters that is witnessed in baptism, so that we are counted ‘worthy ... with boldness and without condemnation to dare to call upon the God of heaven, as Father, and to say: Our Father....’

We can see something of this duality in the Gospels. All the Gospels refer to Jesus’ prayer to his Father; Jesus is depicted as spending whole nights alone in prayer to God who is his Father. These accounts inspire us to devote ourselves seriously to prayer. But there are other passages where Christ is, as it were, assimilated to God; we are not so much expected to enter into his prayer, as to pray to him, to find in Jesus the Lord the source of succor and salvation. An example is the



passage in Matthew’s Gospel, where the Lord says: ‘Come to me, all that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ This sense of the Incarnate Son as sent by the Father and turning to the Father in prayer is the fundamental *Leitmotif* of John’s Gospel.

While the Holy Trinity is truly a mystery, it is a mystery in which we give our belief. How, you might ask, can *one Being* embrace *three distinct persons*? The same might be asked about Jesus. *How can one being embrace two distinct persons*? So again we must ask, *Who is this God in which we believe*? He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday, August 12 - 12th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 3
10:00 AM + Anna Hnatiuk; Luba Bluj

13th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 4

Monday, August 13 - Maximus the Confessor, Venerable
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Tuesday, August 14 - Translation of Theodosius' Relics
No service scheduled

Wednesday, August 15 - Dormition of the Mother of God
7:00 PM - Special Intention

Thursday, August 16 - Translation of the Icon of Our Lord
No service scheduled

Friday, August 17 - Myron, Martyr
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Saturday, August 18 - Florus & Laurus, Martyrs
No service scheduled

Sunday, August 19 - 13th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 4
Parish Celebration of the Feast of the Dormition
10:00 AM + Special Intention

(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)

A holy moment is one during which you make yourself totally available to God. You set aside what you feel like doing in that moment, and you set aside self-interest, for one moment you simply do what you prayerfully believe God is calling you to do in that moment. A holy moment is a moment when you are being the person God created you to be. It is an instance where you set aside also self-interest, personal desire and what you feel like doing or would rather be doing, and embrace what you believe will bring the most good to the most people in that moment.

With practice you can accomplish this!

<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org>



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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

MORE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

I know that this article is one of the more difficult articles to understand. Why? Because I am presenting ideas about Jesus Christ as God and Man. It is an absolute mystery! We can only accept the truth about this with faith. This, of course, is why some religions reject our ideas about Christ because they cannot accept the mystery. The same is true about our understanding of God as Three-In-One.

As I wrote in last week's Bulletin, it is our understanding that the hypostasis of Christ *pre-existed* in its divinity but it *acquired* humanity by the Virgin Mary. The mystery is how Jesus can be both fully God and fully Man.

This fundamental position has two very important implications: (1) There is no absolute symmetry between divinity and humanity in Christ because the unique hypostasis is only divine and because the human will *follows* the divine. It is precisely a "symmetrical" Christology which was rejected as Nestorian in Ephesus (431). This "asymmetry" of Eastern Christology reflects an idea which Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria stressed so strongly: only God can save, while humanity can only cooperate with the saving acts and will

of God. However in the patristic concept of man, "theocentricity" is a *natural* character of humanity; thus asymmetry does not prevent the fact that Christ was fully and "actively" man.

(2) The human nature of Christ is not personalized into a separate human hypostasis, which means that the concept of hypostasis is not an expression of natural existence, either in God or in man, but it designates *personal* existence. Post-Chalcedonian Christology postulates that Christ was fully man and also that He was a human *individual*, but it rejects the Nestorian view that He was a human hypostasis, or person. A fully human individual life was en-hypostasized in the hypostasis of the Logos, without losing any of its human characteristics.

By now, I suspect, my readers are thoroughly confused. I only present this information to try and demonstrate the struggle that the Church has gone through in order to embrace an idea of Who Jesus Is and that we can only *believe* that He is God and Man. He has to be MAN in order for us to be able to imitate Him and His way of thinking and living.

More to follow!



UNDERSTANDING THE HOLY GOSPELS



In this article, I've been sharing with my readers an analysis of the Gospel of St. Matthew, since that is the one that we are currently reading in our weekly worship service, the Divine Liturgy. There is no convincing reason why this material - St. Matthew's Gospel - may not be stray pieces of oral tradition first put in writing by Matthew.

The Evangelist's method of handling his sources can be traced only for Mark. The method can be described in two paradoxical qualities: Matthew is dependent on Mark; and Matthew is very free in the use of Mark.

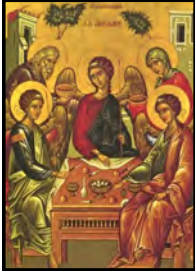
Where Matthew follows Mark, it can be said generally that that it betrays the use of no other source. The expansions are few, and almost without exception they admit an explanation that is based on Matthew's theological conceptions. It follows the order of Mark closely, but allows some rearrangements that again can be explained by its theological purpose.

The general structure - baptism, Galilean ministry, miracles, controversy, confession of Peter, predictions of the passion, journey to Jerusalem, Jerusalem, passion, resurrection, - is not substantially

altered. At the same time, Matthew is free in its use of Mark. The exercise of this freedom is most obvious in the abbreviation of narrative passages, usually by the omission of descriptive details. Matthew makes little use of the dialogue that occurs in Mark; personal names are generally not retained. Conversely, Matthew shows no independence on Mark in its geography; Matthew, which has been alleged to be "Palestinian,:" is much more vague on the geography of Palestine than is John, which has so long been attributed to a Hellenistic (Greek) Christian (or an ex-Palestinian resident of Ephesus).

The sayings of Matthew, both its own and those derived from "Q", are inserted without dislocating the narrative of Mark. Most of them occur as mass insertions. Where Mark has sayings, Matthew by rearrangement of the context sometimes gives them a different turn. This also is an example of freedom; the alterations we find need not be attributed to theological intentions. Some sayings certainly appeared both in Mark and in "Q", but in a slightly different form in each. We can easily suppose that other variant forms of the sayings were in circulation and Matthew felt free to adopt that particular form.

This all tells us that the Gospel writers did not intend to write history but rather documents that could inspire people to believe in Jesus.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 64 No 32 12th Weekend After Pentecost August 11-12, 2018

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

In Western theology, the spiritual man is a 'natural' man to whom grace has been added. Human nature includes the intellectual and the animal life, and to this the spiritual life has been added and somehow superimposed on a purely human economy.

In the East, the expression, man 'in the image of God' (that is, with the grace of the Spirit) defines exactly what man is 'by nature'. 'By his creation man shares the nature of God', Evdokimov states, and so 'chrismation is intrinsic to human nature'. What the West calls 'natural-supernatural' is simply called 'human-divine', or 'created-uncreated' by Eastern authors. Consequently, for man 'the natural' consists of whatever is for him a true good: charity, faith, the virtues, knowledge and so on. Wickedness is sin, evil thoughts, the passions - all those are 'against nature'.

Ephrem explained that it is not man's nature which is corrupted, but his habits, and that this corruption has altered nature. Only deliverance from sin allows the appropriate use of nature. And we read in Evagrius: 'When we were created at the beginning, seeds of virtue existed naturally in us but no malice at all'.

Eastern theologians maintain that conversion or personal transformation is a growth in our ability to be all that God created us to be. This is the meaning and purpose of earthly existence.



Life's Journey is an Ascension to

Unlike Western theologians, Eastern theologians do not speak of "fallen nature." This all harkens to how the East sees the meaning and purpose of life. The fact that we were created imperfect is not a fault but rather a real opportunity to freely and voluntarily work to become the human being calls us to be - that is imitators of Christ.

Explanation to the Emperor

There is nothing in the holy, inspired Scripture about the death of Mary, the holy Mother of God. But we know from ancient and wholly reliable tradition that at the time she so gloriously fell asleep, all the holy Apostles, who were traveling the world for the salvation of the peoples, were lifted up in a single instant of time and were gathered at Jerusalem; and as they stood by her, they saw a vision of angels, and heard the divine chanting of the higher powers ... Her body, which had been God's dwelling place, was brought for burial amidst the singing of the angels and the Apostles, and laid to rest in a coffin in Gethsemane; and the angelic dancing and singing continued without pause in that place for three days. But after three days, the song of the angels ceased; the Apostles were there, and since one of them, Thomas, had not been present (for her burial and came at the end of three days) and

wished to reverence that body which had housed God, they opened the coffin. And they could not find her body, which had been the object of such praise; all that they found were her burial wrappings. And being overcome by the ineffable fragrance that came out of the wrappings, they closed the coffin again. Amazed by this miraculous discovery, they could only draw a single conclusion: the one Who had deigned to become flesh in her own person, and to take His humanity from her, the one Who willed to be born in human flesh as God the Word, the Lord of glory, and Who had preserved her virginity intact even after childbirth, now chose, after her departure from this world, to honor her immaculate and pure body with the gift of incorruptibility, and with a change of state even before the common, universal resurrection.

St. Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem