

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*Icon of Saints Andrew the General and Theophanes -- August 19th*

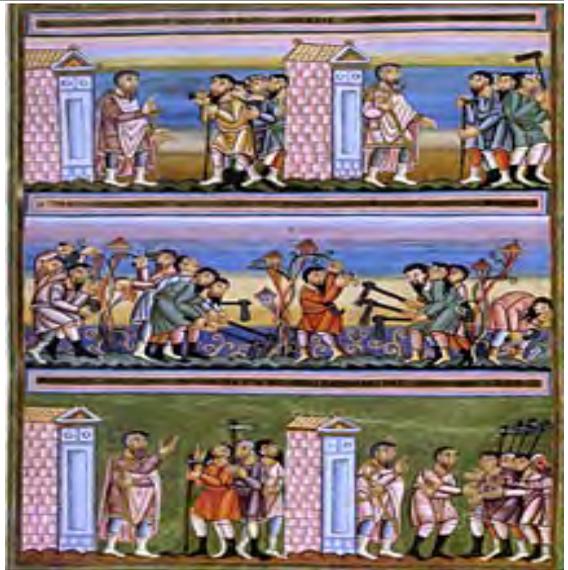
## REFLECTIONS ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this 13th weekend after the feast of Pentecost, we also celebrate the feast of the **Dormition** - Falling Asleep - of the Mother of God, Mary. Because it is a weekend, we have to combine our celebration of the feast with our regular weekend. Our readings for the weekend are taken from the ending of St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians and also St. Matthew's Gospel.

Paul ends his first letter to the Corinthians by exhorting them to "Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, and act like men. In a word, be strong. Do everything with love." This very poignant exhortation is something that we also need to hear, especially in our very confusing, modern society. It is so easy to become seduced by the values of our society. So we too need to stand strong and truly reflect on the true meaning and purpose of life.

St. Matthew's Gospel presents the parable of the "Tenants". The end of the parable states "I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that will yield a rich harvest". It obviously presents the idea that our actions **DO MATTER**. We can either grow in our faith and understanding of life, or we can fail to become a part of the Kingdom of God. Salvation is truly a cooperative activity that we are called to enter into with God.

This passage is also called the parable of the wicked husbandmen. Matthew expands the parable as it is



found in Mark. Two statements in this parable give us insight into its true meaning: (1) *For this reason... the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that will yield a rich harvest*; and (2) *When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard this...they realized he was speaking about them*.

So it seems that this parable really refers to the admission of the Gentiles to the Church and was probably an insertion made by the primitive Church. One can make the point, however, that the parable also reminds us that we always have the obligation to do a *fair days work for the wage we are paid*. We can pair this thought with Paul's thought: as children of God we are called to do everything with love. We have been given life. This calls us to love others.

## SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE DORMITION

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The very ancient, universal and profound cult of the Most Holy Mother of God left a special mark, above all, in our Liturgical Year. Our Liturgical Year is not only rich in the variety of feasts honoring Martyr, but begins and ends with her feasts. The Liturgical Year opens with the Nativity of the Mother of God (September 8th) and closes with her Dormition (August 15th).

The day of the death of Mary is called Dormition because her body, according to our Tradition, did not know corruption after death but together with her soul was taken up into heaven. We have no historical data to indicate how long the Mother of God remained on earth after the ascension of Christ into heaven, nor when, where, or how she died, for the Gospels say nothing of this. The foundation for the feast is to be found in a sacred tradition of the Church dating from apostolic times, apocryphal writings, the constant faith of the People of God, the unanimous opinion of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church of the first thousand years of Christianity and the liturgical practice of the Church.

The earliest written tradition which speaks of the death of Mary is given in the work which, in the east, is titled:

*Sermon of St. John the Theologian on the Dormition of the Mother of God.* Some historians believe that this work dates from the end of the second or third century, while others place it at the end of the sixth century.

From the beginning of the sixth century, it was believed by many that the tomb of Mary was to be found in the Church of the Dormition in Gethsemane, while the Church on

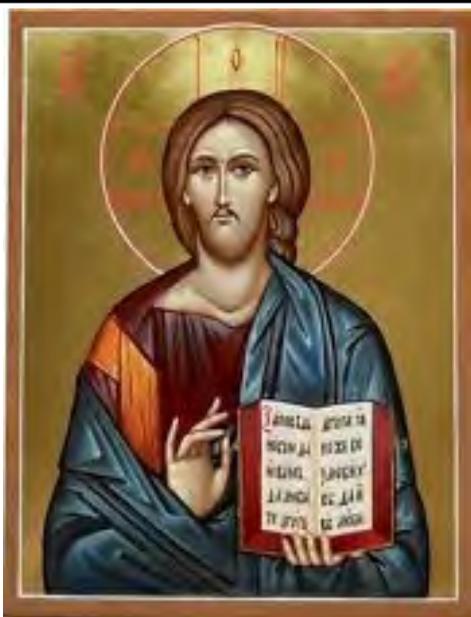


Mt. Sion was regarded as the site of her dormition. Some believe that Mary died in Jerusalem while others claim that she died in Ephesus where St. John was

believed to have taken her after Christ's crucifixion. Even today a house in Ephesus is pointed out as the one where the Mother of God allegedly lived (*I actually visited the site years ago*).

The liturgical cult of the Mother of God began with the Council of Ephesus (431), which defined the dogma of her Divine Motherhood. In the works of the Fathers prior to the fourth century, no mention is made about the Dormition. It was only after the fourth century that church writers begin to write about the final moments in the life of the Most Holy Mother of God.

## ACQUIRING THE MIND OF CHRIST



As I suggested in the last issue of this article, inner life, if not well-grounded in the liturgical life of the Church, can possibly lead us to delusion.

Reading the Gospels is also necessary since they can provide us inspiration to turn our minds and hearts to God. Christ tells us that the words He gives to us “are spirit and they are life” (John 6:63). If we are open and receptive, the Spirit of the Gospel can enter into us, profoundly altering our heart, sanctifying us. Further, not only will we change; through this prayerful encounter we have frequent opportunity for God to speak directly to us in a profound and real way. Reading

the Gospels doesn't require us to spend hours reading. In fact I prefer to just read small portions each time I pick up the New Testament and try to reflect on them. If it is a parable, I read the whole parable. If it is a story, I read the whole story but no more. I then close the book and think about what I just read. I sometimes think people *bite off more than they can chew* and then become discouraged.

We must always remember that prayer is the only bridge over the despondency of the world with its death, sins and passions. It gives light to the mind, helping us to slowly see ourselves as we are, and God as He is. It enables us to overcome temptation and weaknesses. It has the potential to heal our spiritual infirmities. Persistent and patient prayer is the answer to almost all the questions we have; this is so because it grants us God's grace and peace. It also brings us to a saving knowledge of the true God, going above and beyond rational thought. It also helps us to acquire the mind of Christ because it connects us to God. As we all know, the New Testament repeatedly tells us that Jesus spend a great deal of time in prayer. Almost after every miracle or teaching session, the Gospels tell us that He went off by Himself to pray. The disciples took note of this and, therefore, asked Jesus to *teach them how to pray*. It was at that point that Jesus taught them the OUR FATHER, which is the most profound of all Christian prayers. As we also know, prayer generates prayer. The Fathers tell us that prayer will teach us and be our guide if we are devoted to it.



# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan

## FEAST OF THE DORMITION

*Today, August 19th*

*Parish Celebration of the*

**Dormition of the Mother of God**

*Flowers are blessed*

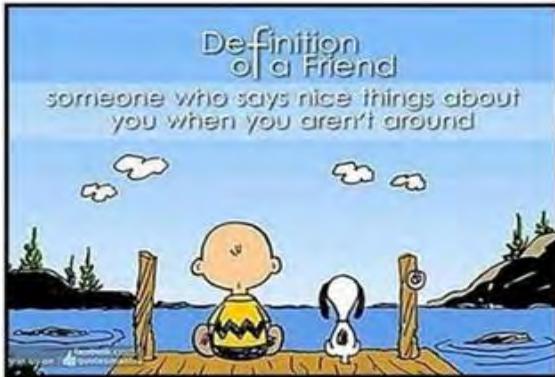
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## ADULT DISCUSSION GROUP

*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.

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***There isn't a way things should be. There's just what happens, and what we do***

## CALLED TO HOLINESS

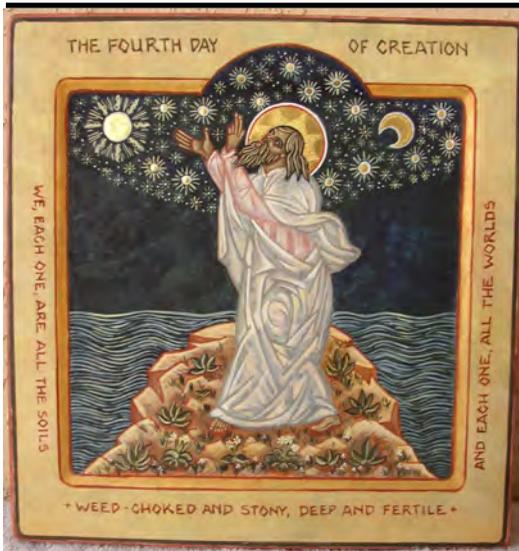
To become holy, as I have shared, is to live one moment at a time. Of course this requires that we live in the present moment. We are robbed of our ability to be holy when we live either in the past or the future. While we can learn from the past, we have to live in the present moment.



As I have been sharing, this idea of the Holy Moment is a thing of beauty. John Keats points out: "A thing of beauty is a joy forever: Its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness." Every good act, every collaboration with God, every Holy Moment fueled by grace echoes throughout history. The good we do is never lost, it never ends, and it never dies. In other places, in other times, in other people, the good we do lives on forever. This is why Holy Moments, however small, however seemingly insignificant, are so powerful. They change people's lives and collectively they change the whole course of human history. One single Holy Moment is a thing of beauty. Its loveliness

*(Continued on page 8)*

## THE WORLD AS GIFT AND WORD



I have been sharing ideas in this article about God's creation and the interconnectedness that exists between humanity and the rest of God's creation. Just as nature is in motion and the human person can turn its motion to good account, so his own needs are continually in motion. The human person discovers in this way the meaning of things which by reason of their continuity are, on the one hand identical and can thus be know in common, while, in their development and the various aspects discovered within them, they are, on the other hand, always new, and as such can raise the human person to a spiritual understanding that is increasingly more sublime. The human person can achieve this inasmuch as the very components from which

things are made are themselves elastic and mobile and can be combined in different ways - though always within certain limits - just as the human being, too, can move gradually without overstepping the bounds of a particular line of development. Thus, a certain elasticity exists among the ways of combining the component forces of nature, just as a certain elasticity exists among the ways in which the human person lives and conducts himself spiritually and physically. Physical nature and human nature provide a space that always lies open to the exercise of human freedom.

We cannot consciously coexist among things without adapting them to our needs and without making provisions and reciprocal promises related to the fact of our interventions into the sphere of these created things, that is to say, without discovering and bringing into act the common general meanings of things and of men. This presupposes both the rationality of things and also the elastic quality they have within the framework of a rationality that can be envisaged on a larger scale.

Heavy!!! All that this is saying is that there is, because of God's plan for all creation to be interconnected - which includes humanity - and therefore supportive of humankind coming to an understanding of the meaning and purpose of life. Creation can, if we truly reflect upon it, help us to understand why things are the way that they are.

## 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 19 - 13th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 4**  
**10:00 AM + Special Intention**

### 13th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 5

**Monday, August 20 - Samuel, Prophet**  
**8:00 AM - Special Intention**

Tuesday, August 21 - Thaddeus, Apostle  
*No service scheduled*

Wednesday, August 22 - Agathonicus & Others, Martyrs  
*No service scheduled*

Thursday, August 23 - Lupus, Martyr  
*No service scheduled*

Friday, August 24 - Eutyches, Bishop-Martyr  
*No service scheduled*

Saturday, August 25 - Return of Bartholomew's Relics  
*No service scheduled*

**Sunday, August 26 - 14th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 5**  
**10:00 AM + Special Intention**

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

increases. It will never pass into nothingness.

The second reason why a Holy Moment is a thing of beauty is that it is replicable. You don't need to read another book to learn how to collaborate with God and create a second Holy Moment. The fact that you can cooperate with God to create one Holy Moment proves that holiness is possible for you, and it provides the blueprint for thousands of Holy Moments.

*I wonder how many of my readers have already begun to attempt trying Holy Moments in their lives. It is not beyond your ability to do so!*



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Pastor

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Cell: (313) 580-4412  
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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)

## MORE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

In this article I have been exploring the various thoughts or ideas about Who Jesus Is. This requires, therefore, some thought since I've been presenting also thoughts that have come into existence which have been declared heretical. For example, the theory, associated with the name of Apollinaris of Laodicea, and according to which the Logos, in Jesus, had taken the place of the human soul, was systematically rejected by Byzantine theologians since it implied that the humanity of Christ was not complete. Cyril's celebrated formula - wrongly attributed to Athanasius and, in fact, uttered by Apollinaris - "one nature incarnate of God the Word" was accepted only in a Chalcedonian context. Divine nature and human nature could never merge, or be confused, or become complementary to each other, but, in Christ, they were united in the single, divine hypostasis of the Logos: the divine model matched the human image.

Again, this idea of how Christ Jesus could be both God and Man was very challenging to the Fathers of the Church and they desired to find a way to exactly describe it even though it is a mystery. The fact that the notion of



hypostasis is irreducible to the concepts of "particular nature," or to the notion of "individuality," is crucially important not only in Christology but also in Trinitarian theology. Hypostasis is the person, "acting" source of natural life; but it is not "nature," or life itself. In the hypostasis, the two natures of Christ accomplish a union without confusion. They retain their natural characteristics; but, because they share a common hypostatic life, there is a "communication of idioms," which, for example, enables some of Christ's human actions - words or gestures - to carry consequences which only God could have provoked. The clay made out of His spittle, for example, restores sight to the blind man.

**JUST A NOTE.** While I know that this article can be very 'dense' and difficult to, perhaps, understand, I also would challenge my readers to a higher level of thinking about this great mystery of our religion. I do believe that if a person takes the time to think about these things, that it become more evident. Our faith is well thought out. What we believe is steeped with many years and decades of many persons thinking about what we believe.

# UNDERSTANDING THE HOLY GOSPELS

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I have been sharing thoughts and information about the Gospel of Matthew since that is the Gospel that is prescribed for us to read from during this time of the year.

Hopefully its beginning to make sense to you that the Gospels are not meant to be history or an actual accounting of the exact events in the life of Christ. While they are based on some actual events, they are intended to bring their readers to belief in Jesus as the true Messiah.

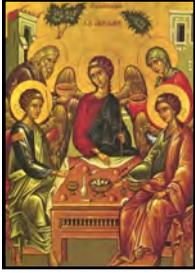
It is not entirely certain that we can project Matthew's handling of Mark into the handling of his other sources. Because of Matthew's interest in Jesus' teaching, it may be a poor presumption that he treated the sayings that came to him in the same manner as the narratives of Mark. Certainly he did not regard Mark's sayings as immutable formulas; not infrequently he couched them in a form he considered better. He could have shown the same freedom combined with dependence toward "Q" that he shows toward Mark but we have no reason to assert that he treated "Q" with less freedom than he applied to Mark. Like any author, his desire was to inspire people to believe in Jesus Christ and he thought that his

approach would do that! Again Matthew was not an historian and his reason for constructing a Gospel was not to report historical facts and data. He was writing to convince people, especially Jewish people, that Christ was the true Messiah even though he did not act like the Messiah that they expected or wanted.

For the sayings peculiar to Matthew we have no point of reference at all; but if the Evangelist allowed himself liberty in his use of the other sources, it seems improbably that he denied himself liberty here.

There is a certain 'theological' character to Matthew's Gospel. He, Matthew, has been called a Christian scribe or rabbi. The designation means that he instituted the same kind of study of the Gospel that the scribes of Judaism made of the Law. The parallel should not, however, be pressed too closely. There is a world of difference between Matthew and the Talmud. Nevertheless, there are points of contact between Matthew and the rabbinical writings that are not found in the other Gospels.

As you may or may not know, individual rabbis would interpret the Law in a particular way and have followers. This persists even to this day. There was never any real uniform understanding of Judaism. It all depended upon the rabbi that you followed. We like to think that there is really only one truth and interpretation.



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Vol. 64 No 33 13th Weekend After Pentecost August 18-19, 2018

### THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

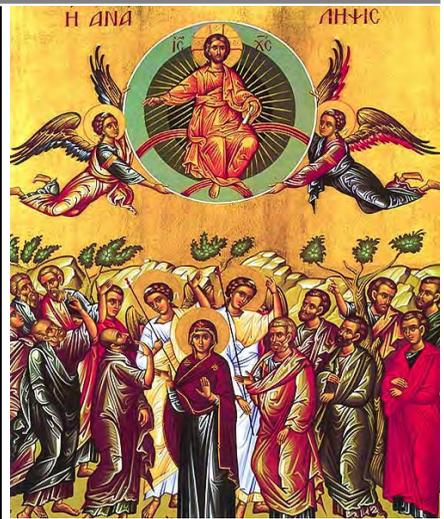
The East has defended the basic goodness of 'human nature' because Eastern theologians were always fighting traces of Manichaeism, Messalianism and other dualistic systems.

**Manichaeism**, (a dualistic religious system with Christian, Gnostic, and pagan elements, founded in Persia in the 3rd century by Manes), was based on a supposed primeval conflict between light and darkness. It spread widely in the Roman Empire and in Asia, and survived in eastern Turkestan until the 13th century.

**Messalianism** is a Christian sect, condemned as heretical in a synod of 383 CE. The name 'Messalian' comes from the Syriac meaning 'one who prays'. Messalians teach that once a person has experienced the essence of God they are freed from moral obligations or ecclesiastical discipline.

The living God calls man to eternal life in him. He is 'the fountain of life'. Christ is the source of life and bestows it abundantly. He is the life. The passage from death to life is repeated in the one who believes in Christ. Yet, this life will not reach perfection until the day when the risen and glorified body will be part of it, when 'Christ, our life' will be manifested.

So the spirituality of the Christian East is built on the beliefs we have about God, the purpose of human life and the meaning of human nature. The East looks to the meaning and purpose of



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

our human existence. Indeed God did not create humanity with the ability of distort His plan, even though he created us with free will. Rather, He created us with the ability to 'grow' and 'develop' into the beings He created us to be, namely His adopted children. He gave us a model to help us. That model is Jesus Christ!

### *The Body and Blood of Christ*

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will

have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord. A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.

That is why many among you are ill and infirm, and a considerable number are dying. If we discerned ourselves, we would not be under judgment; but since we are judged by [the] Lord, we are being disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

*1 Corinthians 11:23-32*