

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Christ Raising the Widow's Son (Luke 7:11-16)

REFLECTIONS ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

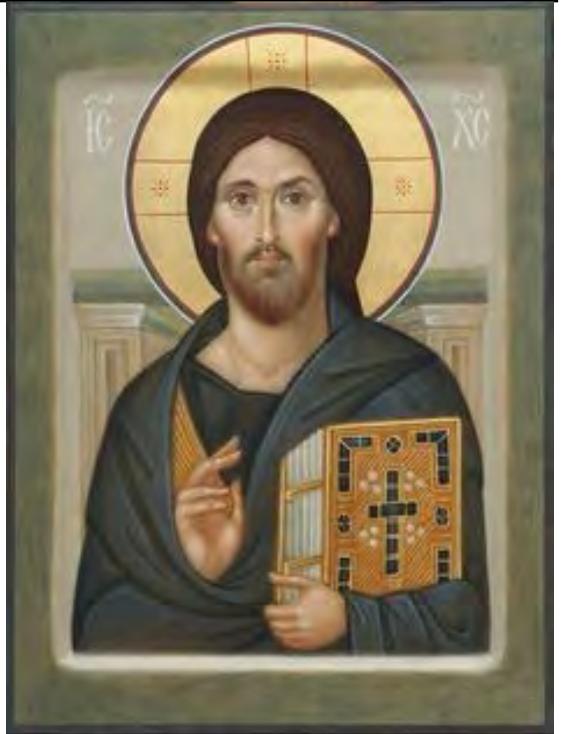
On this 20th weekend after Pentecost, our readings are taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians and Luke's Gospel. This year there is no "Lukan Jump" in our Gospel readings.

Why, after the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, is the reading of the Gospel of St. Matthew suddenly interrupted and why do we start then with the reading of St. Luke? One would suspect that we would then move to reading from Mark's Gospel.

At first glance, this jump appears to be arbitrary, more especially as there is no parallel in the reading of the Epistles. To be sure, there is nothing arbitrary, although throughout the centuries the rationale has been forgotten. First, let us keep in mind that the fact that the reading of the Gospel of St. Luke follows the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross is merely coincidental and the theological reason lies elsewhere.

Actually, the change is related to the chronological proximity of the commemoration of the Conception of St. John the Baptist celebrated on September 23rd. In later Antiquity, this feast marked the beginning of the ecclesiastical New Year.

Thus, the reason for starting the reading of the Lukan Gospel toward the middle of September can be understood. This is based on a vision of Salvation History: the Conception of



the Forerunner constitutes the first step of the New Economy, as mentioned in the *stikhera* (i.e., special prayers of the matins) of this feast. As we know, the Evangelist Luke is the only one to mention this Conception. Later on, the introduction of new feasts, especially that of the Nativity of the Theotokos (September 8th), contributed to the downgrading of the significance of the Conception of St. John (*which we celebrated last week*).

The Eastern Church has always observed the "Lukan Jump." However, some decades ago, upon the advice of the a liturgical specialist, the "Lukan Jump"

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was reintroduced into our Liturgical practice. Since this action implies a connection between the cycle of the “Sanctorale” (Menaia - the book that contains special prayers for all feasts during the year) and the cycle of the feast, the date of which is determined by the date of Pascha, there is a practical difference between the Churches following the Julian Calendar (i.e., the Old Calendar) and those using the Gregorian Calendar with regard to the timing of the “Jump.”

So let me reflect upon the readings that are assigned. The first, our Epistle, from Paul’s Letter to the Galatians and then a portion of Luke’s Gospel.

I would assert, in concurrence with St. Paul, that what I share with you is, in effect, my understanding of the message of Christ. I try to be true to the message of Christ as I hear it. I would also encourage all of you to hear the message of our readings in accord with the Holy Spirit within you. God allows you to hear the message that is pertinent to you. I share only how I have received the message and it may not be the same for you.

Paul tells us that he believes what I have suggested, namely that God allows the messages of the Gospel and

the Epistle to be unique to each person who hears them. His only intent is to reach the hearts and souls of each of us. SO, we must be feel free to listen for the message that God has for us.

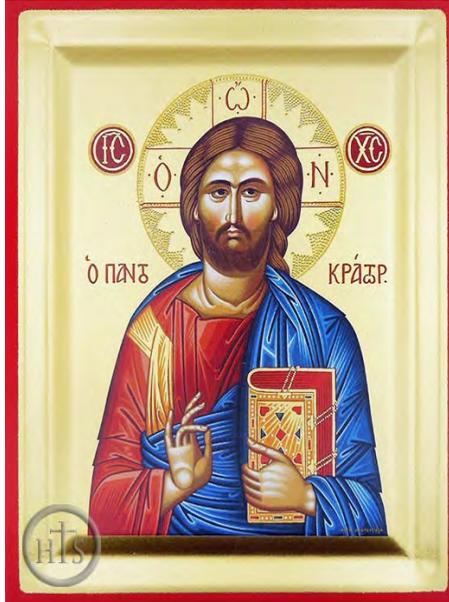
Our reading from the Gospel of Luke relates the story of how Jesus rose from the dead the son of a widowed mother. This story highlights Jesus’ compassion.

A widowed woman with only one son, was to become homeless when he son died. She could not go out and get a job (*this is also true of Jesus giving Mary, while on the Cross, to his disciple John*). What I take away from this story is the Lord’s total compassion and His true awareness of the norms of His society. The only way that He could truly be helpful to this widowed

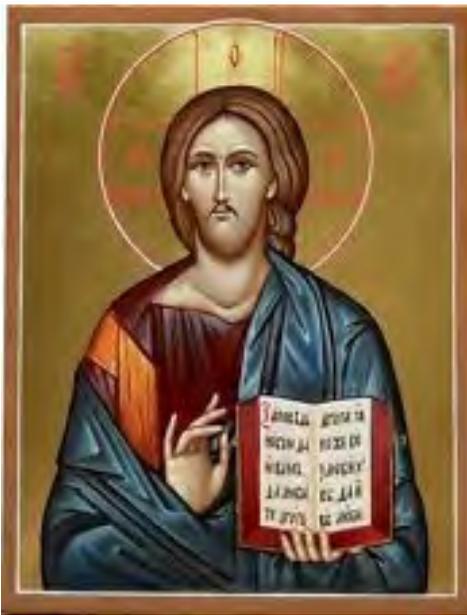
mother is by raising her son from the dead.

So Jesus showed us how to function in the world and society in which we live. He unconditionally loved people in the society in which He lived, not in some perfect society. We are, of course, called to do the same. How do we make the Christian message - the Christian way of loving - work in our own modern society. He faced the same challenges that we do and He made it work.

What about us?



ACQUIRING THE MIND OF CHRIST



In the last issue of this article, I shared with you how the Western Church approaches the work of Jesus on the Cross. As we see it in the Eastern Church, this Western Church approach lost the patristic perspective which meant the loss of the full experience of the Church. Without it, Roman Catholic theology often became a narrow juridical procedure overly focused on appeasing God's justice.

Again it must be noted that the Church is a human organization which is highly influenced by the culture in which it lives. The Roman world was obsessed with the idea of justice and this influenced how

the Church looked at the work of Jesus. This truncating of salvation is further reinforced by St. Augustine's non-Eastern conception of grace. For St. Augustine, it seems that man may never participate in God's deifying energies, and therefore man and God remain forever external to each other. Ultimately, this leads to salvation not defined by communion with God, but rather primarily a moral and legal relationship.

In contrast, the Eastern Church's view of justification is being empowered by grace to live according to God's will. By living according to God's will, we effect our sanctification, thereby participating in God's life. By being united with the One Who overcomes death, we overcome sin and death, participating in His victory, making it our own. In the Eastern Church's perspective, Anselm's understand of God's wrath and punishment are non-existent (*I'm sure my readers, if they have been following this article, remember Anselm's perspective on Christ's death on the Cross*). His ideas are not the ideas of the Eastern Church.

The Eastern Church teaches that Christ, by His very Incarnation, took away the sin of the world and destroyed death. St. Gregory the Theologian says the passage "the Word was made flesh" (John 1:14) is equivalent to that in which it is said that "He was made sin or a curse for us" (1 Corinthians 5:21); not that the Lord was transformed into either of these - how could he be? But because by taking them upon him he took away our sins and bore our iniquities.

The Eastern Church has a much different approach to salvation. What say you?:



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan

FEAST DAY CELEBRATION

Sunday November 11th



This year our Parish Council has elected to try something different to celebrate our Patronal Feast. Instead of having a catered dinner, we will be meeting at a

restaurant: CARIERAS ITALIAN which is located on Telegraph Road, north of Ford Road and South of Warren Road. It is on the West side of Telegraph. This will allow members of the Council to enjoy the celebration without the responsibility of "clean-up."

Donation: \$20 with a cash bar.

There will be a choice of four different entrées and the meal comes with salad or soup and coffee. There will be dessert.

RESERVATIONS ARE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

For those needing transportation, we will be making arrangements. The Reservation Sheet is coming.

Lighten up, just enjoy life, smile more, laugh more, and don't get so worked up about things

CALLED TO HOLINESS

Holiness is possible! Holy moments are possible! This is a beautiful truth, and truth animates us. This is also the very will of God. Paul write this: *This is the*



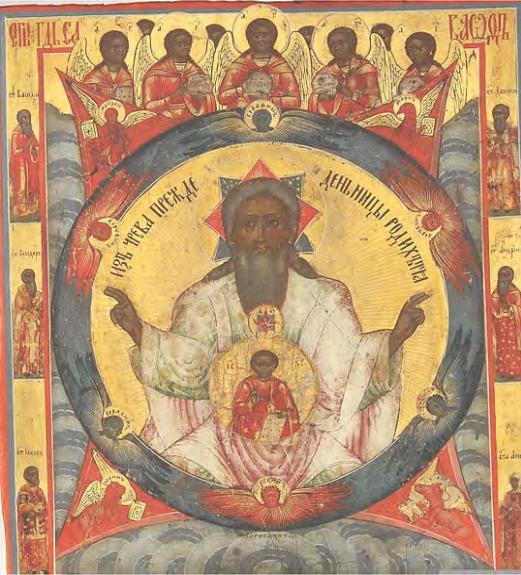
will of God, that you be holy. Don't let yourself be neutralized by the biggest lie in the history of Christianity, namely that holiness is beyond human ability.

Holy moments come in all shapes and sizes, but the majority of them are small and anonymous. Here are some holy moments.

- ◆ Begin each day with a short prayer of gratitude, thanking God for giving you another day of life.
- ◆ Go out of your way to do something you would rather not do for someone in your life
- ◆ Before making a decision, ask, "what will help me become a better version of myself?"
- ◆ Encourage someone, praise someone and affirm someone.
- ◆ Be patient with the person who drives you crazy
- ◆ Give whoever is in front of you your full attention

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MAN, THE TARGET OF GOD



Before acquiring any knowledge of the true nature of the human person (*hypostasis*), we live in this world like in a prison. Just as the child living in the womb of his mother is fed by what the mother eats and breathes what the mother breathes, but has not yet a real life; so we, like the child, have to come forth from the prison of the womb and breathe the air freely in order to develop and become a person. If we are instructed by the spirit of this world which is vanity and futility, giving in to the passions of our undeveloped nature, then we are deprived of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

As prisoners of the delusions of this world, we cannot breathe the air of the upper world, the air of heaven. We have to be born again

spiritually to breathe the air of the upper world. We have to receive the gift of Pentecost anew, so that even our flesh will desire the Living God and no longer the base passions. We must cry out to the Lord like David, “Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your Name.”

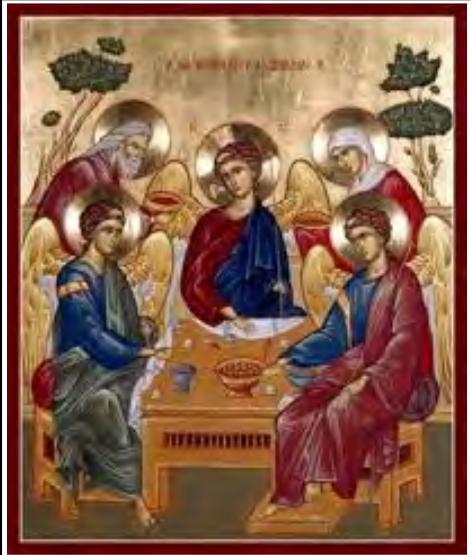
The true prophet and Apostle, the man who is born from the Holy Spirit, has only one desire: to render unto God everything which is holy because the Lord is Holy. The holiness that he seeks in us is nothing other than our spotless and humble love. Have been made in the image of Christ, we have the capacity to know His love unto the end, and only when we acquire this love to the point of seeking it only can we truly relate to our prototype. Love for God slays any hint of self-centeredness. This new and spotless love detaches us even from the very desire to live, so that we have only one purpose, that Christ may be glorified and magnified in us.

I know that at first blush, this sounds very scary. It means forgetting about ourselves in one sense and placing our whole hope and trust in God truly believing that if we do this we will find fulfillment and peace and truly come to know the real meaning and purpose of life. Living in the way will also result in us coming to truly know ourselves and finding how absolutely valuable we are because we are God’s intended creation. It is God Who chose us to be who we are. We must rejoice in that and realize our absolute worth and goodness.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY - WHO IS GOD?

In the last issue of this article, I shared with my readers how John Damascene, one of our great Eastern Church Fathers, approached the understanding of God, namely by denying that our concepts of God cannot match up to the reality of God. God, indeed, is beyond human understanding. Having thus made clear the indirectness of our language about God, John introduces us to the notion of God as One, and underlines the reality of the One God confessed in the Scriptures in contrast with the many gods of pagan polytheism (*in making so much of this, John may have had in mind his Muslim contemporaries and political masters, for he was writing in Palestine after the Arab conquest of the seventh century*). This one God, however, manifests himself as Word and Spirit, which flow from the Father and are one with him: it is through the Word and the Spirit that we come to know God, the Father.

John also explores what we can make of the Holy Trinity. Again, John starts by emphasizing that this is all beyond our comprehension, all we can hope for is to avoid misunderstanding that will lead us away from God rather than open our hearts to him. He introduces the language: the one *ousia* of God, the three *hypostases* of the Trinity. But he also introduces a concept that had not hitherto been used with much confidence in relation to the Holy Trinity: the idea of *perichoresis*, 'interpenetration' or 'coherence.' The persons of the Trinity are not separate from each other, as human persons are. According to John they interpenetrate one another. Without losing their distinctness as persons, the reality coincides or coinheres. John is quite clear, in contrast to some modern theologians, that what is the case with the Trinity is *not* the case



with human beings. The Trinitarian communion of persons is not a model for human communion. Rather, it is characteristic of the *uncreated* nature of the Godhead that the persons should coinhere with one another; with created natures it is different - in reality they are separate; any communion they have is a form of sharing.

Again it is interesting that John, who strongly promoted the *unknowability* of God, went to such great length to try and find a way to explain how three Persons can be in One Godhead. He knew he had to preserve *monotheism* and yet he believed Jesus was also God. Truly an interesting history.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

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

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

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

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Sundays @ 10:00 AM
Ukrainian & English

Weekdays @ 8:00 AM
English

SACRAMENTS

Penance
By Appointment

Baptism & Matrimony
In most instances membership
required for six months

Funerals
Membership of an immediate
family member required

Parish Life Council

Bob & Corinne Boyko
734.451.1893

John & Janet Dicky
313.563.5509

Daria Drobny
313.791-0292

Robert Krokosky
248.431.9554

Leo & Mary LaDouceur
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak
734.564.9817

Leonard Mier
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter
313.624.9867

Sunday, October 7 - 20th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 3
10:00 AM + Stanislaw Krowicky; Leo & Mary LaDouceur

21st WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 4

Monday, October 8 - Pelagia, Venerable
No service scheduled

Tuesday, October 9 - James Alpheus, Apostle
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Wednesday, October 10 - Eulampius & Eulampia, Martyrs
No service scheduled

Thursday, October 11 - Phillip, Deacon-Apostle
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Friday, October 12 - Probus & Others, Martyrs
No service scheduled

Saturday, October 13 - Carpus & Others, Martyrs
No service scheduled

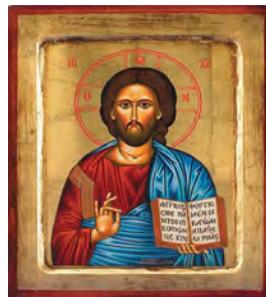
Sunday, October 14 - 21st Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 4
10:00 AM + Andrew Farmer; Leonard Mier; 40th Day

(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)

As you can tell, these are all very simple actions which can, if done voluntarily and with the right intention, Holy Moments. These holy moments develop truly positive habits which can lead to real holiness.

Holiness is possible. You and I can collaborate with God to create holy moments. Try it today. In the process you will truly become a *better-version-of-yourself* and helping others to also become better versions of themselves. You will also make the world a better place and your life much more peaceful.

Ask yourself these two questions: *Why did God create you? Why did He come into the world?* Hopefully both answers include the word LOVE.

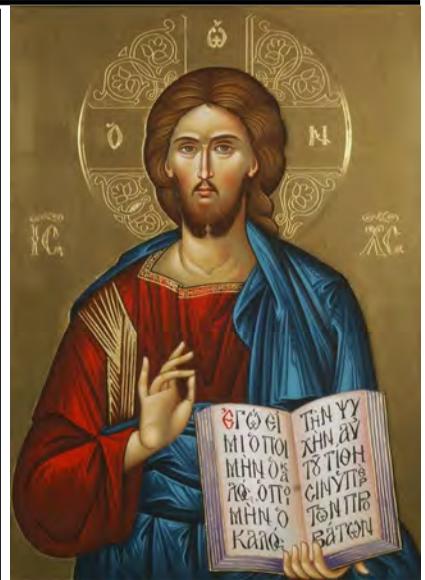


<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org>
[facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn)

MORE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

I am sure that those who have been following this article, will admit that the Church struggled to come to a real understanding of Jesus. As a result of this struggle, there were many theories that were judged to be heretical. One such heresy was *Aphthartodocetae*. The leader of this heresy was the sixth-century theologian Julian. He believed that Christ's humanity was *incorruptible*. One scholar has shown that the issue was not so much the connection between hypostatic union and corruptibility, but the very nature of man. Is man *naturally* corruptible (as he is *naturally ignorant*), or did corruptibility come with sin? The *Aphthartodocetae* denied that man by nature was corruptible. Since Christ is the New Adam and the truly "natural" man, His humanity was indeed incorruptible. In rejecting this theory, the Eastern Church affirmed (1) that the inheritance of mortality from Adam was not an inheritance of guilt, and (2) that the Logos voluntarily assumed, not an abstract ideal manhood, but, rather, our undeveloped humanity with all the consequences, including corruptibility. Opposition to this heresy certainly contributed to preserving a clearer notion of Christ's real and full human nature.

Iconoclasm was certainly another way of denying that Christ is man in a concrete and individual manner. Patriarch Nicephorus, one of the leading polemicists, called it *Agraptodocetism* because iconoclasts considered Jesus as "indescribable." In order to justify the possibility of painting an image of Christ, John Damascene, and even more explicitly Theodore the Studite, strongly insisted upon His individual human characteristics: "An indescribable Christ, writes Theodore, "would also be an incorporeal Christ. Nicephorus, in order to defend the use of images, stresses very forcibly the human limitations of



Jesus, His experience of tiredness, hunger, thirst: "He acted, desired, was ignorant and suggested as man." This means that He was man like all of us, and can be represented in an image - in an icon.

For Theodore the icon of Christ is the best possible illustration of what is meant by the hypostatic union. What appears on the image is the very hypostasis of God the Word in the flesh. In our tradition the inscription around the halo surrounding the head of Jesus says "THE ONE WHO IS", the name Yahweh gave to Moses in the burning bush.

Take a good look at a Christ Icon.

UNDERSTANDING THE HOLY GOSPELS

Irenaeus alone of the early writers suggests a date for Matthew's Gospel. He makes the authorship of Matthew contemporaneous with the preaching of Peter and Paul in Rome (i.e., before 68 CE). This detail cannot be tested. Internal evidence suggests (*but does not demonstrate*) a date later than the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. But the familiarity of the author with Palestinian Jewish customs does not allow us to remove the Gospel - in space or in time - too far from Palestinian Judaism before the Jewish rebellion. It is not without interest that Matthew's acquaintance with Jewish customs and practices is not matched by acquaintance with Palestinian geography. His geography lies most in Galilee, and Matthew, as a Palestinian Jew, need not have known Galilee. But if the Gospel was written later than 70 CE, there are excellent reasons for thinking that it was written outside Palestine. Many scholars suggest Antioch in Syria, a city where Jewish and Gentile Christianity met and mingled, and where the questions of the relations of the Law and the Gospel were very probably acute. The material peculiar to Matthew is best explained as drawn from Palestinian traditions directly; and this would have been possible in Syria.

To outline Matthew or any of the

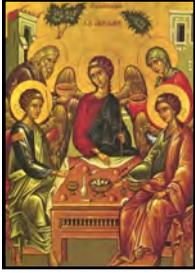
four Gospels might appear to be a simple task. But commentaries on Matthew show a surprising diversity in their conceptions of the plan and outline. This diversity is ultimately due to the Evangelist, who in this as in other respects is more subtle than he seems: the plan of the book is a part of his purpose. The plan I will present presents certain difficulties. That is, the discourse against the Pharisees, which is nearly as long as the missionary discourse, is not treated as a separate discourse; nor is the eschatological discourse counted in the number. But since the discourses are obvious points of division and are easily recognized, I will present this outline.

The principal divisions of Matthew are as follows:

- I. Prologue: The Coming of the Savior
- II Promulgation of the Reign of God
- III Preaching the Reign of God
- IV Mystery of the Reign of God
- V The Reign Become Church
- VI First Steps in Establishing God's Reign
- VII The Passion and Resurrection

As I suggested, Matthew chose this particular outline because he felt that it would bring others to belief in Jesus Christ. He was not writing history. He was bringing people to belief in Jesus.





THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 64 No 40 20th Weekend After Pentecost October 6-7, 2018

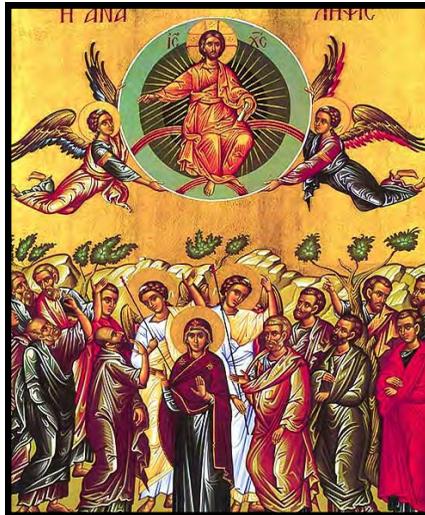
THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

In the last issue of this article, I shared that the first step in the pursuit of Eastern Spirituality was coming to know God in accordance with our traditions. Our traditions tell us that He is with us, within us and that His Spirit dwells within us. Why? To help us make sense out of the challenges of this life. It is truly important to really understand that God does not make all of the challenges of life happen. He has given to us the ability to present challenges to us that will help us grow. The question: *Why would allow these things to happen?* is not really relevant. God has willed that life should present to us those challenges that will help us to grow. We also know that some of the real challenges that we face in life are the product of our own human invention. We cause so many things to happen without even thinking about it. Just

consider the entire idea of “global warming.” We see all the things that are happening and yet we don’t want to accept the fact that we are causing our environment to change. We want to exploit the earth and then wonder why it rebels and brings on disasters that we have to deal with.

We always have to remember that God only wants what is good for us and that we grow and change. This is the only way that we can deepen our real and true relationship with Him. He wills that we have a relationship with Him - that is why He brought us into

existence. This life is given to us to help us become more fully God’s children - beings which He created in His image and gave the potential to grow in His likeness as seen in the Person of Jesus Christ. I would encourage you to think about this and reflect upon it and then pray!



Life's Journey is an Ascension to

Jesus, the Lord of Life

How do you respond to the misfortunes of others? In a number of places the gospel records that Jesus was “moved to the depths of His heart.” Our English word “compassion” is a weak translation of the Hebrew word for “sympathy.”

Why was Jesus so moved on this occasion? Jesus not only grieved the untimely death of a youth, but he showed the depth of his concern for a woman who lost not only a husband, but an only child as well. The scriptures make clear that God takes no pleasure in the death of anyone (e.g., Ezekiel 33:11); God desires life, not death. Jesus not only had compassion, He also had power – the ability to restore life and make whole again. Jesus, however, incurred grave

risk by approaching the bier, since contact with a dead body made one ritually impure. His touch not only restored life but brought freedom and wholeness to soul as well as body.

This miracle is reminiscent of the prophet Elisha who raised another mother’s son (see 2 Kings 4:18-37). Jesus claimed as His own one whom death had seized as its prey. By His word of power He restored life for a young man marked for death. Jesus is Lord not only of the living but of the dead as well. Jesus triumphed over the grave and He promises that because He lives, we also shall live in Him (John 14:19). Do you trust in the Lord’s power to give life and hope in the face of misfortune and despair?