

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*Icon of Saints Terrence and Eunice -- October 28th*

## REFLECTIONS ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this 23rd weekend after Pentecost, our readings are taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians and Luke's Gospel story about Christ's encounter with the Gerasene Demoniac. In Paul's Letter he presents the "generosity" of God's Plan. He writes: *God is rich in mercy; because of his great love for us he brought us to life with Christ when we were dead in sin.* He then concludes his thoughts of God's Plan by writing This: *We are truly his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to lead a life of good deeds which God prepared for us in advance.* I think it is important to note that Paul implies that all the events of life are prepared by God, through life itself, to help us grow in the likeness of Jesus Christ. His plan is to make it possible for us to grow in Jesus' likeness so that we can become more fully and completely united to Him. God so loves His creation that He does everything possible to bring us, His children, to a deeper union with Him.

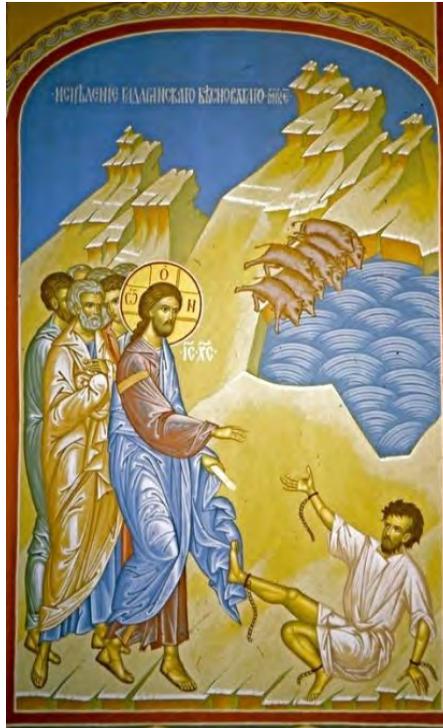
The story of curing the Gerasene demoniac in Luke is slightly different from the story in Matthew. In Luke, the possessed man recognizes divinity

within Jesus, obviously a later editorial addition. Obviously the problem of the "ensuing loss" of someone's property was of no concern to Luke - and it should not be that of the modern reader of this story. To ask about it is to miss the point. Luke insists that Jesus has accomplished a work of salvation. Jesus recruits this Gentile as one of his first "evangelists," telling him to go forth and tell others about this wondrous act.

I do believe that the story is intended to share with others that Jesus has power over all things, that is illnesses as well as demonic forces. I also believe that Luke makes sure that he places this story in Galilee, again setting the stage for the Good News to be something that

pertains to all humankind.

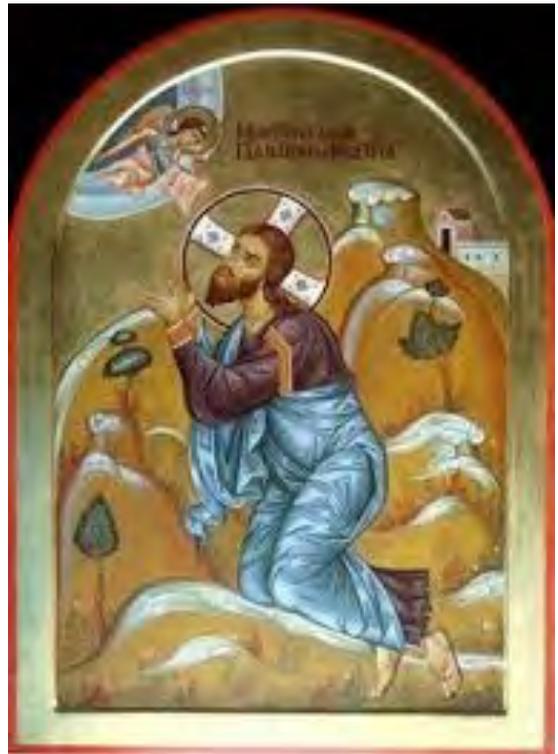
All humans are God's handiwork. All, who are created in His image, are called during this earthly existence to grow in His likeness as made manifest through the Person of Jesus. This is what this earthly existence is all about: to learn how to be more like Jesus, to learn how to be truly one of God's children.



## SOME THOUGHTS ON PRAYER

Prayer assuredly revives in us the divined breath which God breathed into our nostrils and by virtue of which we 'became a living soul'. Our spirit, regenerated by prayer, begins to marvel at the sublime mystery of being. The mind is filled with wonder. 'Being', how is it possible?' And we echo the Psalmist's praise of the wondrous works of the Lord. We apprehend the meaning of Christ's words, *I am come that men and also women might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.* More abundantly - this is indeed so.

But again and again I find myself reflecting that life is full of paradoxes. Like the Gospel teaching: 'I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?' All sons and daughters of Adam must go through this heavenly flame that consumes our deathly passions. Otherwise we shall not see the fire transformed into the light of new life, for it is not light that comes first and then fire. In our present state, burning must precede enlightenment. Let us, therefore, bless the Lord for the consuming action of His love. We do not know altogether but we do at least know 'in part' that there is no other way for us mortals to become 'children of the resurrection,' children of God, to reign together with Christ, the only-begotten Son of God. However painful this re-creating may be, however, it may distress and lacerate - the process, agonizing as it

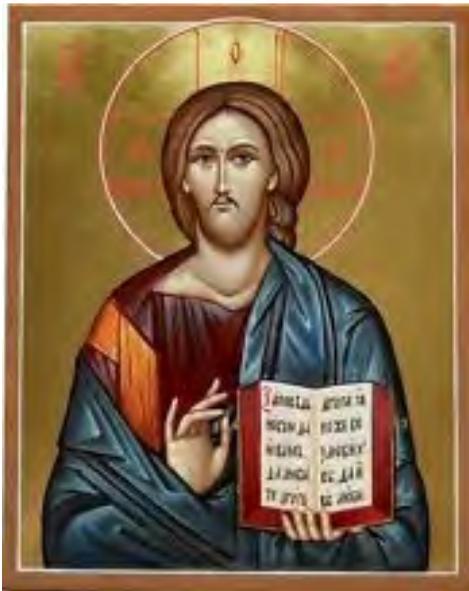


is, in the end will be a blessed one. Erudition requires prolonged and intense labor but prayer is incalculably harder to acquire.

So prayer allows us to begin to see and accept the challenges of life as opportunities to spiritually grow. The challenges we have in life are not, in any way, punishments. They are simply the experiences that we need to grow spiritually and begin to understand the meaning and purpose of life.

While we typically start learning how to pray by using formulized prayers, hopefully we grow to use our own words. Remember, prayer is a conversation with our God.

## ACQUIRING THE MIND OF CHRIST



In the Gospel account of the rich man and Lazarus, we recall that the rich man was separated from Abraham's bosom "by a great chasm" that could not, interestingly, be spanned. Abraham still spoke with the rich man. Hell then cannot be seen as a place as we understand it, for St. John Chrysostom tells us that it is outside the created world. Concerning this issue, St. John says we do not need to know where it is as we will not understand anyway. Rather our concern should be how to avoid it.

The Eastern patristic consensus generally has a different focus from that of

even the pre-schism Western saints. Although both use the imagery of hell in the familiar fire-and-brimstone accounts, the Eastern focus tends to be more concerned with how heaven and hell is experienced in the heart of man through the virtues and the passions. St. Isaac the Syrian explains that Paradise is the love of God; the uncreated energy of God. Yet, at the same time, this love is experienced as a scourge by unrepentant souls who cannot bear the pure glory of God. From the patristic perspective, God Himself is heaven for the saints and hell for the sinners.

We recall in the third chapter of the Book of Daniel the account of the three children in the fiery furnace. They serve as a type for this understanding of the afterlife. The three children who kept the commandments of God were not burnt by the fire but danced in the flames with the Angel of God, while those who heated the furnace out of malice and in wickedness were consumed by that very same fire.

Thus eternal life is light to those who have followed the commandments of the Lord and purified their heart and mind, whereas this same light will be darkness and misery to those who are living in the state contrary to the will of God. Maximus the Confessor explains that "the inheritance of the saints is God Himself, and he who is found worthy of this grace will be beyond all ages, times and places: he will have God Himself as his place."

***I realize that all of this seems to be beyond reason. Just think about it.***



# 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.

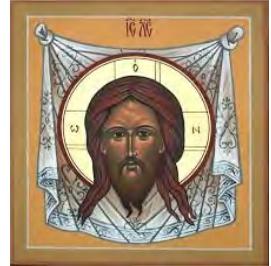
### RESERVATIONS ARE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

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

***Life is 10% what happens  
to you and 90% how you  
react to it.***

## CALLED TO HOLINESS

Everyone knows the world needs in a variety of ways to be changed. Parents are concerned about the world in which their children will be living. It is a mean and heartless and rude world. Grandparents often tell me that they try not to think about the world their grandchildren will grow up in because it makes them too anxious. There are very few senior citizens that I speak with who are not worried about the future of our country and world. In fact I don't know anyone who thinks that our world is in great shape. Just the entire debate over climate change makes everyone cringe, especially when we consider the strange weather we have been experiencing as a country. I also know anyone who thinks our culture is moving in a promising and positive direction that will be good for all men, women and children. It seems to be universally understood that the world needs changing in some way. Of course there are arguments about how the world should change. Arguments seem to be based



*(Continued on page 8)*

## MAN, THE TARGET OF GOD



The God of Christians is not a distant god who has a single hypostasis and who cannot be determined. Neither is He a mere absolute and transcendent being or some impersonal power, the product of fear or a sickly human imagination. God is near and known to man, who is His most precious creation. God has revealed Himself to man. He is a Fact surpassing the created intellect. He is God in Trinity. The whole of Sacred Scripture relates His wonders, in the creation, preservation and salvation of the world. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Certainly, we received the surest and most perfect knowledge of God in the Person of the Only-

begotten Son and Word of God when He became a true man *for us and for our salvation.* He Himself *has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is the true God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.* Again, it is He Who bestows the grace of regeneration and the power of sonship, upon all who believe in His Name.

Therefore, God is Trinity, one God in three Persons or three Hypostases, inseparable and undivided. Each Hypostasis or Person is perfect and true God, bearing in Himself the fullness of Divine Being, its Essence and its Energy. Nevertheless, God is One with a single Essence or Nature from which a single Energy or Glory shines forth. The Father without beginning, eternally begets the Son, and pre-eternally issues the Spirit Who proceeds from Him, conferring upon Them the totality of His Being. The Son is begotten of the Father and lives totally in the Father and in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, lives totally in the Father and reposes in the Son.

Despite the absolute simplicity and non-compositeness of the Divine Being, there are three distinct *aspects* or *modes* of Being: The Hypostasis (Person), the Essence (Nature) and the Energy (Act). The Hypostasis identifies completely with the Essence and the Essence with the Energy, without one of these three *aspects* being reduced to the others.

***This is how theologians attempt to explain God as Trinity: Three-In-One!***

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY - WHO IS GOD?

While it may seem redundant that I am writing two articles that deal with the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. This dogma or doctrine is the most profound of all of our beliefs and therefore I believe that not enough can be said about our belief that the God we believe in is Three-In-One. So I am hoping that by sharing an abundance of thoughts about the Trinity might bring about a deeper faith in all of us.

Over the centuries there were many ideas formulated with regard to the Trinity, many of them declared as heretical. One heretical idea was the Son and Spirit were creatures created by the Father. The Church answered very clearly and strongly that the Son and the Holy Spirit are not creatures, but are uncreated and divine with the Father and they act with the Father in the divine act of creation of all that exists.

Another wrong doctrine is that God in Himself is One God who merely appears in different forms to the world: Now as the Father, then as the Son, and still again as the Holy Spirit. The Church answered once more that the Son and Word is in *the beginning with God*" (Jn 1.12) as is the Holy Spirit and that the Three are eternally distinct. The Son is *of God* and the Spirit is *of God*. The Son and the Spirit are not merely aspects of God, without, so to speak, a life and existence of their own. Indeed, how strange it would be to imagine, for example, that when the Son becomes man and prays to his Father and acts in obedience to Him, it is all an illusion with no reality in fact, a sort of divine presentation played before the world with no reason or truth for it at all!

A third wrong doctrine is that God is one,



and that the Son and the Spirit are merely names for relations which God has with Himself. Thus, the Thought and Speech of God is called the Son, while the Life and Action of God is called the Spirit; but in fact - in genuine actuality - there are no such "realities in themselves" as the Son of God and the Spirit of God. Both are just metaphors for mere aspects of God. Again, however, in such a doctrine the Son and the Spirit have no existence and no life of their own. They are not real, but are mere illusions.

So you can see how the Church struggled to refine her ideas about God in light of the Person of Jesus Christ.

# SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

**Sunday, October 28 - 23rd Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 6**  
**10:00 AM + Wasyl Tkacz; Family (40th Day)**  
**+ Stephen Michael Mihalko; Kotlinski Family**

## 24th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 7

**Monday, October 29 - Anastasia, Venerable Martyr**  
**8:00 AM - Special Intention**

Tuesday, October 30 - Zenobius & Zenobia, Martyrs  
*No service scheduled*

Wednesday, October 31 - Stachis, Ampliatus, Urban & Narcissus  
*No service scheduled*

**Thursday, November 1 - Cosmas & Damian, Unmercenaries**  
**8:00 AM - Special Intention**

Friday, November 2 - Akindynos & Others, Martyrs  
*No service scheduled*

Saturday, November 3 - Acepimas & Others, Martyrs  
*No service scheduled*

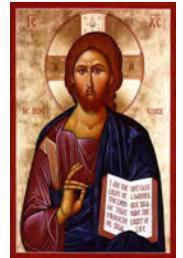
**Sunday, November 4 - 24th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 7**  
**10:00 AM + Special Intention**

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

on how we can obtain *more things* and have an easier life.

The problem concerning Christianity's role in changing the modern world is that most Christians no longer believe we are capable of accomplishing that change. An additional problem is, as I see it, that we don't know how to live in a pluralistic society - a society where there is a great variety of moral values. Life would be simple if we lived in a homogeneous society - where everyone embraced our Christian values and lived in accord with our Christian moral standards.

So how do Christians maintain a belief that holiness is possible in a world where there are such heterogenous beliefs? ***What's your answer?***



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### LITURGY SCHEDULE

**Sundays @ 10:00 AM**  
Ukrainian & English

**Weekdays @ 8:00 AM**  
English

### SACRAMENTS

**Penance**  
*By Appointment*

**Baptism & Matrimony**  
*In most instances membership  
required for six months*

**Funerals**  
*Membership of an immediate  
family member required*

### Parish Life Council

Bob & Corinne Boyko  
734.451.1893

John & Janet Dicky  
313.563.5509

Daria Drobny  
313.791-0292

Robert Krokosky  
248.431.9554

Leo & Mary LaDouceur  
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak  
734.564.9817

Leonard Mier  
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich  
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Rafic Vawter  
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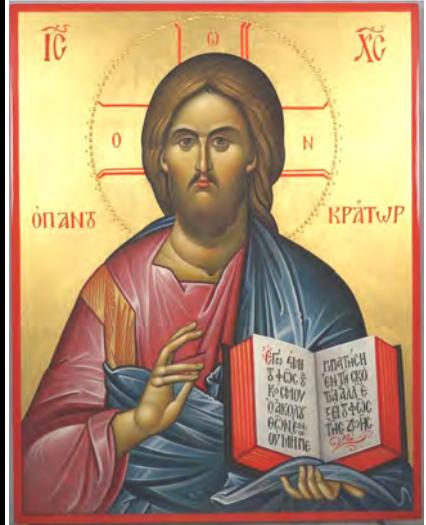
<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org>  
[facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn)

## MORE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

The whole history of Christological dogma was determined by this basic idea: the Incarnation of the Word, as Salvation.

Byzantine theology did not produce any significant elaboration of the Pauline doctrine of justification expressed in Romans and Galatians. The Greek patristic commentaries on such passages as Galatians 3:13 (*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us*) generally interpret the idea of redemption by substitution in the wider context of victory over death and of sanctification. They never develop the idea in the direction of an Anselmian theory of "satisfaction" (*you will recall I wrote a number of things in past bulletins about Anselm's idea of substitutionary satisfaction - in fact I also shared an article for our Adult Discussion sessions that focused on this Western idea*). The voluntary assumption of human mortality by Christ was an act of God's "condescension" by which He united to Himself the whole of humanity. For, as Gregory of Nazianzus wrote, *what is not assumed is not healed, and who is united to God is saved; therefore, we needed a God made flesh and put to death in order that we could live again.*

The death of "One of the Holy Trinity in the flesh" was a voluntary act, a voluntary assumption by God of the entire dimension of the human condition. *There is nothing in Him by compulsion or necessity; everything is free: willingly He was hungry, willingly thirsty, willingly He was frightened and willingly He died.* But this *divine* freedom of the person of Christ did not limit the reality of His human condition. The Lord assumed a *mortal* humanity at the very moment of the Incarnation, at which time the free divine decision to die had already been made. *He takes a body, a body which is not different from ours,*



writes Athanasius. *He takes from us a nature similar to ours and, since we all are subject to corruption and death, He delivers His body to death for us.*

The idea that the cross was the purpose of the Incarnation itself is vividly suggested by the Byzantine liturgical texts of the Nativity. This is why we say that it is important to know the liturgical texts that we use because they present our theology, our understanding, of the mystery of God's Incarnation and all that Jesus taught and did, even His death on the cross.

***Ask yourself, do I understand why Jesus died on the Cross?***

## UNDERSTANDING THE HOLY GOSPELS

Luke's Gospel ushers the New Testament (NT) into the world of literary excellence. He moves with masterful control and delicate smoothness from the classical style of the Prologue to the strongly Hebraic tone of the Infancy Narrative to the heavily septuagintal pattern of the rest of his Gospel. In Acts he reverts to the classical style (*remember that he is purported to have written both the Gospel and Acts*). For instance, his use of the Greek verb *egeneto* (*it happened*) is striking. The Septuagint (LXX) form (*egeneto* followed by a finite verb without *kai*) occurs 22 times in Luke but never in Acts. The classical Greek construction (*egeneto* followed by an infinite) is found 5 times in Luke and 15 times in Acts. While this may seem rather pedantic, I include it only to show you that when the Scriptures are analyzed, scholars look at word usage.

Luke the physician writes with an observant eye to mannerisms, psychological reactions, and hidden motivations. He alone gives the psychological setting in a number of different passages (e.g., 3:15; 4:14; and 9:43 to name but a few). His pagan origin as well as his extensive traveling is probably responsible for his broadminded openness to all groups of peoples. He shows a favoritism for minorities, segregated groups like the Samaritans, lepers, underprivileged, soldiers, publicans, public sinners in disgrace, unlettered shepherds and the poor. All these receive special encouragement in his Gospel.

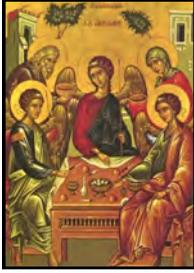
Luke writes primarily for Gentiles and for their sake he makes many changes in the Gospel tradition. He will either omit Semitic words or find a substitute for them. He never uses the following Semitic words that occur in other Gospels: *abba* (Father); *Boanerges* (sons of thunder); *ephphatha* (be opened); *hosanna* (save, we pray). Instead of the Hebrew title *rabbi*, Luke prefers *didaskale* (teacher), and especially *epistata* (master). He will give the



meaning of the world instead of its Aramaic form.

Another concession to Gentile readers is his practice of seldom - at least as compared with Matthew - quoting the Old Testament (OT). But he has another way of inferring the fulfillment of OT hopes and promises. For Luke, Jesus himself is the prophet: he uses this title for Jesus more often than Mark. Jesus appears especially in the role of Elijah, the prophet sent to the Gentiles. And yet Luke never presents Jesus preaching to Gentiles.

***Try reading some of Luke's Gospel and see if you get a sense of all this.***



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

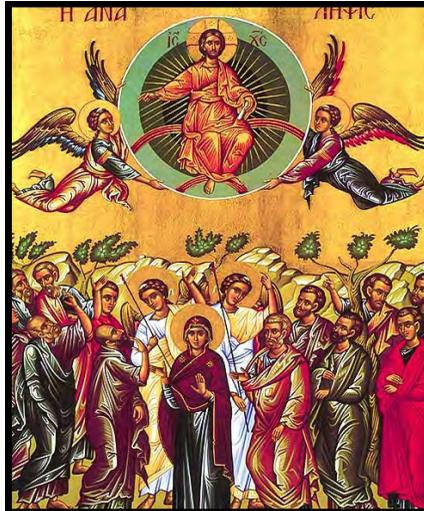
The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Vol. 64 No 43 23rd Weekend After Pentecost October 27-28, 2018

### THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

The foundation for Eastern Spirituality is the idea of *Theosis (Deification)*, an idea which I have frequently interjected in my Bulletin Articles. I have treated this subject before, but would return to it again since it is such a critical concept.

All major religions agree on one thing: the deepest desire of the human person is to get in contact and to live in union with his or her God. Different religions offer truly distinctive understandings about the nature of that union and the way to the attainment of salvation or union with God. These differences notwithstanding, it seems reasonable to argue that salvation involves some form of union with God. Thus, the desire for union is the theme of religions and, consequently, theologies and spiritualities. Let us not be too naïve, however, for I am not suggesting that all religions are equally valid ways

of salvation; nor am I arguing that it does not matter what one believes and how one lives to be saved. I would leave those thorny questions out of my considerations here.



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

What I am saying is simply that: any religion that wants to redeem its promises should give an answer to the most profound question of human life, namely, what is the way back to God, to live with God, to live in God and share in the divine? Our Christian theology has, from the beginning, offered an answer to the world and its followers in the form of the doctrine of

*deification* and/or union with God. Even though the Eastern wing of the church has been the major carrier of this doctrine through the patristic era to our days, never has it been the sole treasure of one part of Christendom. The Eastern and Western Churches seem to use a different vocabulary.

## *Holy Unction*

When one is ill and in pain, this can very often be a time of life when one feels alone and isolated. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, or Holy Unction as it is also known, reminds us that when we are in pain, either physical, emotional, or spiritual, Christ is present with us through the ministry of His Church. He is among us to offer strength to meet the challenges of life, and even the approach of death.

Christ came to the world to “bear our infirmities.” One of the signs of His divine Messiahship was to heal the sick. The power of healing remains in the Church since Christ himself remains in the Church through the Holy Spirit. The Sacrament of the Unction of the sick is the Church’s specific prayer for healing. If the faith of the believers is strong enough, and if it is the will of God, there is

every reason to believe that the Lord can heal those who are diseased.

The express purpose of the Sacrament of Holy Unction is healing and forgiveness. Since it is not always the will of God that there should be physical healing, the prayer of Christ that God’s will be done always remains as the proper context of the Sacrament. In addition, it is the clear intention of the Sacrament that through the anointing of the sick body the sufferings of the person should be sanctified and united to the sufferings of Christ. In this way, the wounds of the flesh are consecrated, and strength is given that the suffering of the diseased person may not be unto the death of his soul, but for eternal salvation in the resurrection and life of the Kingdom of God.

*Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America*