

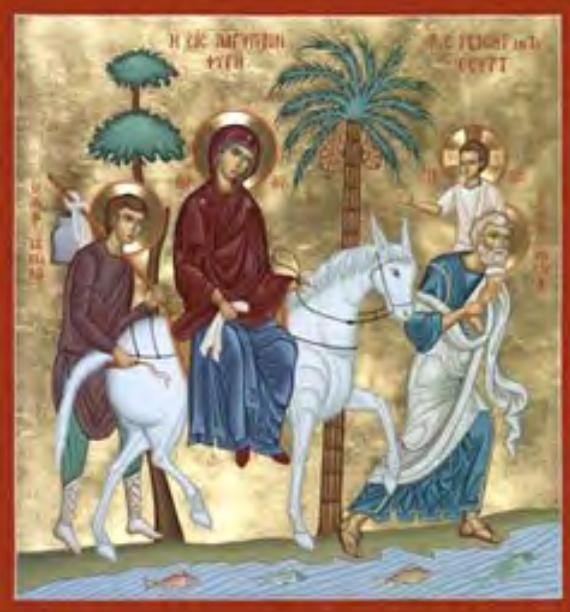
SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD



THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

Icon of the Flight into Egypt -- Matthew 2:13-23

A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND



The Gospel story that we hear on this weekend after the feast of the Nativity of Christ, only appears in Matthew's Gospel. It is the story of the flight of the Holy Family from Bethlehem to Egypt. It is interesting that Matthew is the only evangelist that includes this story since it was a significant event in the life of Jesus. Only Matthew and Luke include an "Infancy narrative" in their Gospels. Luke, however, does not include the "Flight into Egypt" in his Gospel. Perhaps a clue as to why this story only appears in Matthew's Gospel is found in author's intent for writing his Gospel and the particular audience of his Gospel.

Matthew was writing mainly for Jewish people and he was attempting to make the case for Jesus being the NEW MOSES - the Messiah who would

lead His people out of captivity and to freedom in a new land. In order to do this, Jesus had to come out of Egypt the land where Jewish people were held captivity for a number of years and from whence Moses led them to freedom.

Who knows if this happened? Who cares? Jesus is a NEW MOSES for those who believe in Him and since He gave us a NEW LAW and a new way of living. Like the Moses of the Old Testament, Jesus is the giver of the New Law: *Love Your Neighbor As Yourself* so that you can truly love God.

What is the captivity that Jesus has freed us from? The captivity of sin - the captivity of living only for ourselves! The New Law tells us that love of God is directly connected with love of neighbor. Why? As St. John clearly states in one of his writings: You cannot love God Who you cannot see if you hate your neighbor who you see. It is all about "authentic" living. If I cannot learn to love those who I actually see, what makes me think I can love someone Who I cannot see? Its all about learning how to actually love.

On earth we are clearly given concrete situations where we can learn the skill to unconditionally love. This then allows us to love the Being, God, Who is not concrete.

We are rapidly ending 2018. Now is the time to truly begin to learn the skill of unconditionally loving others.

RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

It is truly a venerable and noble custom among Americans to make New Year's Resolutions. The problem is that too often these resolutions are quickly and firmly discarded. I would challenge all of my readers to make resolutions to "grow spiritually" during 2019. Make a firm resolution to honestly look at the way that you think and behave and then **CHANGE** what needs to be changed so that your thinking and behaving is more in line with the way that Jesus thought and behaved.

Most of us have been given a new year of life. **NOW** is the time to truly make it a year of spiritual growth. All of eternity depends on how you decide to live now. If you don't want to go through the same struggles in the next life that you had to confront in this life, then now is the time to change. It must be remembered that how we live this present life determines how we have to live the next life.

One of the reasons that the Church decided to make New Year's Day a holy day is that she truly wanted to encourage all of her members to make an honest attempt to have the opportunity to have a clean slate and begin a new year with a different attitude and a new goal. Don't allow the failures of the past year keep you from making new, spiritual goals for the New Year. Our failures of 2018 can be wiped out with our resolutions for 2019. This all rests with our own resolutions and personal resolve.



What do you want 2019 to be like? Do you want it to be a year of personal spiritual growth? Again, what are your intentions. If you desire to make 2019 truly a spiritually fulfilling year, it will be. But, of course, you have to want it to be. It will not be if you don't intend it to be. It is your choice.

SO, will 2019 be a year when you will truly give yourself to spiritual growth and development? We must always remember that it might be our last opportunity to embrace personal change. It is our choice.

So, will you personally make a true resolve to:

- (1) introduce more prayer into your life;
- (2) make sure you think about things the way Jesus thinks about them;
- (3) embark on a program of growing spiritually, attempting more and more to unconditionally love your neighbors as yourself;
- (4) make worship of God a primary goal of your life; and
- (5) thank God for your life.

What say you?

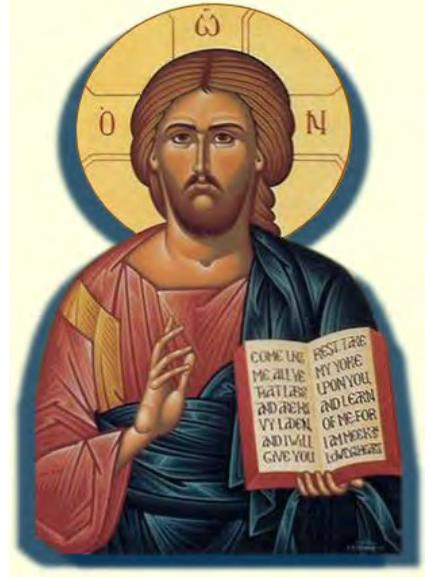
ACQUIRING THE MIND OF CHRIST

One of the things that helps, I believe, to acquire the mind of Christ is to realize that He had to work to develop the attitudes He had. He wasn't born with the attitudes. Like us, He had to formulate, as a man, His ideas about God, life and others. He obviously had good earthly parents and grandparents to give Him ideas but He had to become His own man and decide what type of person He would be. I think we too often don't think about this and just believe that because He was also God that He was born with all the insights He had about life.

Again when we realize that He had to make decisions about how He would live, we are given the courage to work to become like Him. I truly believe that sometimes we so romanticize Him and Mary that we fail to realize that they were called to make human choices just as we are called. They didn't have life any easier than we do. That is why they are excellent models for us. They showed us that we can become just like them if we put our mind to it and, besides, we have them as models.

One of the beliefs that supported Jesus in developing His "way of living" was His belief that GOD IS WITH US. He professed during His lifetime His belief that He had a personal relationship with God, calling Him Abba - Father. This was not typical of the other members of His religious community and, in fact, He was judged by the leaders of His religion to be blasphemous because He professed this deep sense of being personally connected to God. Although others in His community thought of being "chosen" by God, they did not believe that they had the same kind of personal relationship with God as Father to Child. This made Jesus unique in His approach to God.

If we are to acquire the mind of Jesus, we



too must develop this sense that we are God's children. God is not someone who is disconnected or distant from us but, rather, is sharing LIFE with us.

This unique attitude of Jesus was one of the factors that finally led the Church to also see Him as God as well as man. The fact that He had this belief set Him truly aside from all other prophets of history and it is this belief, namely that we humans are intimately connected to God, is one of the truly distinguishing features of Christianity. No other religion seems to have this same belief and sense about God.

St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE



As a Christmas Outreach effort, we are collecting “dry food products” to be distributed to the poor. There will be a big box in the vestibule to receive your donations. We are

still collecting food products!

NEW YEAR'S DAY

*This is a major Holy Day
TUESDAY, JANUARY 1st*

10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

NEXT WEEKEND

*Feast of Theophany
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Great Blessing of Water*

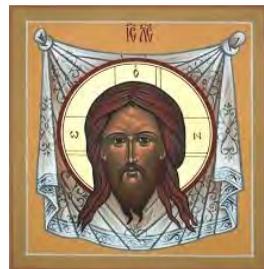
ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

If you will be making contributions to the church after January 1st but would like to have them counted as your 2018 Donations, please let us know. We will receive 2018 contributions until January 15th. **Thank You.**

Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans.

CALLED TO HOLINESS

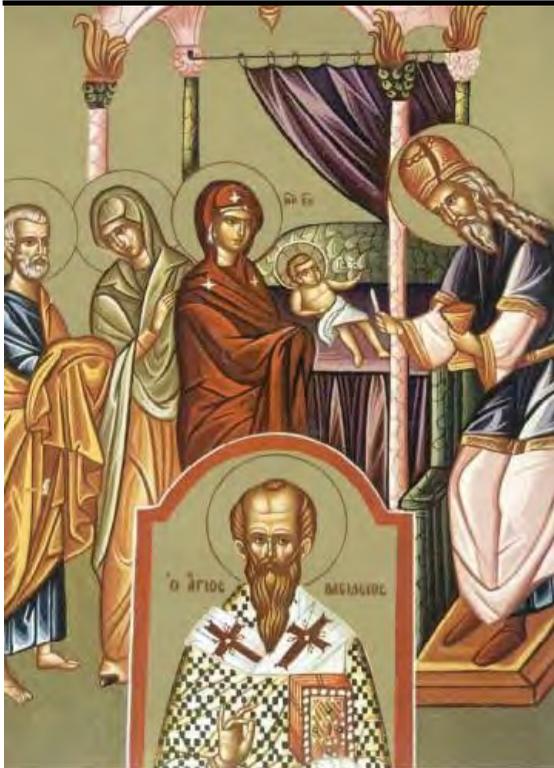
All through this Christmas season I have exhorted my readers to think about what God has done for us. It is my sincerest belief that God, because for His



love for us, actually became a human being in the person of Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. This, of course, can only be a tenet of our belief as followers of Christ. How can we truly believe this? How could the Creator of the Universe decide to become a human being so that His creation, especially human beings, might know that they are created in His image and have the potential to grow in His likeness? This is our belief. Our belief as Christians sees that we humans were created in the Creator's image - we have been given free will and reason - and that we have been given the potential to grow in His likeness as expressed in the Person of Jesus, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. This belief is significant. First, what does it mean that we humans were created in His image? It means that we have the ability to think and to choose

(Continued on page 8)

THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW CALENDAR YEAR



The calendar New Year begins with the celebration of the Circumcision of Jesus Christ and Basil and Great. This does not mark the beginning of the New Church Year. It began on the 1st of September. Rather, the calendar New Year begins with Christ's submission to the Law of Moses, which was the Law of His Religion, and Basel the Great who was His true follower and a leader in the religious practice that we follow. The above icon truly reflects this union.

Basil the Great truly reflects the efficacy of the Jesus message. He tells us, in no uncertain words, that Jesus is

the Son of God Who came into the world to show us how to live.

He wrote extensively about our faith. He adapted the original worship of the Apostles, seen in the Liturgy of St. James, as it was celebrated in Jerusalem, and made it, in its modified form, available to other non-Jewish Christian Communities.

As the early Christians did, they modified the Jewish ritual to include the "Supper" that Jesus celebrated with His Disciples. This complex, bifurcated form of worship became the Christian form of worship of the Creator-God. St. Basil created a form, later modified by St. John Chrysostom, to be the worship of the followers of Jesus Christ. It is a worship of the Father, Who is seen as the one-true-God, our Most Holy Trinity.

We honor Basil the Great on the first day of the New Calendar Year to help us to see that the belief in Jesus Christ is our salvation - is our help in truly seeing the meaning and purpose of human of life. The purpose and meaning of human life is to become people who more emulate Jesus Christ - who are more like the human Jesus Who is the Incarnation of our Living God.

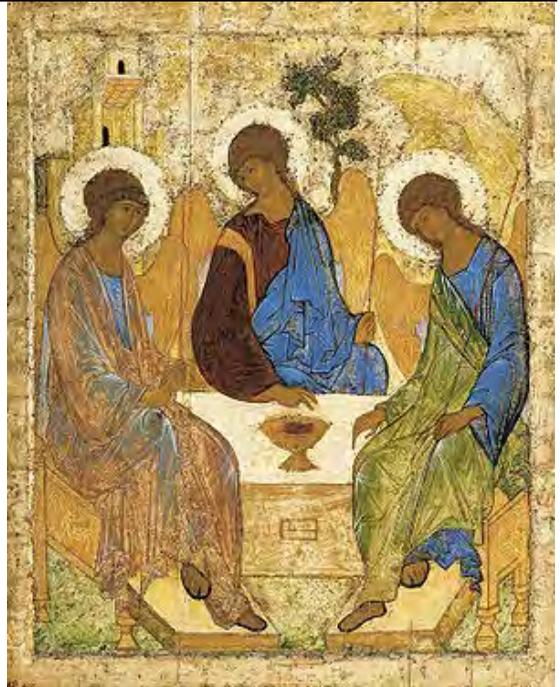
The New Calendar Year gives us a new chance to become more like Jesus, our Brother and Christ. The New Year gives us a new opportunity to grow in our likeness of Jesus; What will you do? Will take this opportunity?

How will you begin the New Year?

THE HOLY TRINITY: STRUCTURE OF SUPREME LOVE

I thought that I would introduce a new article into my Bulletin. I got the idea from a recent experience I had sharing our understanding of God with a non-Christian. Indeed, our Tripersonal, Consubstantial form of God has great significance since it truly expresses the Creator's love for us, His creation. I hope that my readers will find this as interesting as I do.

I am sure that all will agree with me when I say that God in Himself is truly a mystery. Of His inner existence nothing can really be said. But through creation, through providence and His work of salvation, God comes down to the level of man. He who made us as thinking and speaking beings has made Himself accessible to our thought and our speech. Touching our spirit He wakens in us thoughts and words which convey the experience of His encounter with us. But at the same time we realize that our thoughts and our words about Him do not contain Him completely as He is in Himself. For us humans they are flowers grown up from the depths of His ineffable mystery. Our words and thoughts of God are both cataphatic and apophatic, that is, they say something and yet at the same time they suggest the ineffable. If we remain enclosed within our formulae they become our idols; if we reject any and every formula we drown in the undefined chaos of the ocean. Our words and thoughts are a finite opening towards



the infinite, transparencies for the infinite, and so they are able to foster within us a spiritual life.

We are aware of the infinity of the divine ocean but we do not dissolve in it ourselves. We communicate with it in human fashion, going down into its depths with the diving suit of human nature and human formulae, or sailing on its vast expanse in a boat constructed according to laws based on our experience of the ocean itself and therefore adequate to it but adapted also to our own human limitations.

It is my hope that as I explore with you more about who we think God is that it will help you in your quest for a relationship with Him. *More to come*

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, December 30 - Sunday After Christmas - Tone 7
10:00 AM + Special Intention

33rd WEEK AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 8

Monday, December 31 - Melany, Venerable
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Tuesday, January 1 - Feast of the Circumcision & St. Basil the Great
10:00 AM - Special Intention

Wednesday, January 2 - Sylvester, Pope
No service scheduled

Thursday, January 3 - Malachy, Prophet
No service scheduled

Friday, January 4 - Synaxis of 70 Apostles
No service scheduled

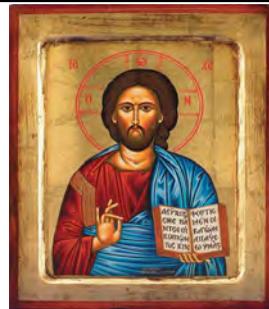
Saturday, January 5 - Vigil of Theophany
No service scheduled

Sunday, January 6 - Feast of Theophany - Tone 8
10:00 AM + Special Intention

(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)

what we do. This is, in itself, a very tremendous gift. To be given the power to choose what we want to do is truly a sharing in the Divine. So we have this gift. We are also given the potential to become God Who became a human person, namely Jesus Christ. We have the power to become like Jesus. God has given this to us. It is all a matter of our personal choice.

So many powers have been given to us humans. We have free will. We can decide how we live and how we believe. It is all a matter of what we feel is appropriate. God gave us this power. He sees us as His children and the only thing He wants is our free return of His love. Will you return His love?



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

MORE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

In the last issue of this article, I introduced the Apollinarianism heresy. Although heretical, the basic intuition of Apollinarianism was not completely wrong. His idea that, in Christ, the Word of God became a human being and lived a human life, and that, as the Word made flesh, there was a union between God and man: this was how most Christians were coming to formulate their belief. But what kind of unity would be possible for such a being? For most Christians the response was along these lines: this is a mystery beyond our understanding; there are various analogies we can draw, but the truth escapes our comprehension. Yet there must be real unity. It is evident from the Gospels that the Lord was a single being, not two beings inhabiting the same skin. One way of putting this unity was to say that there was in Christ one center of activity: whatever Christ did could be said to be what the Word Who had assumed the humanity was doing, there was no one else there to be the subject of Christ's activity, and yet everything the Word did in Christ was done through the humanity of Christ; the Word as Christ did not operate independently.

There was, however, a group of theologians in Antioch who found this model unsatisfactory, and in interpreting the Gospel accounts of Christ wanted to distinguish between two 'persons', perhaps characters.



Some acts of Christ could be ascribed to the Word - his works of miracles, for instance; others had to be ascribed to the human person in Christ - his being hungry and thirsty, and other manifestations of human need. The controversy became a conflict when one of these theologians, Nestorius, was appointed to the increasingly important see of Constantinople, the capital of the Roman Empire, 'New Rome.' The flashpoint was the title for the Virgin Mary of *Theotokos*, the 'one who gave birth to God'.

I shall share information about this particular controversy in the next issue. The struggle to understand Who Jesus Is took over 500 years.

MORE ABOUT HOLY SCRIPTURES

If you have looked at our Church Calendars, you will note that our weekly readings are varied. It doesn't seem that we only read from one particular Gospel and our secondary Epistle readings are truly varied. Therefore I have decided that I will attempt to continue sharing some information about the Gospel of Luke, which, at the present time, our New Testament reading is from this third Gospel.

No other evangelist has placed such emphasis on the prophetic word of Jesus. No other is so optimistic over the favorable response it is destined to receive. Nothing that the divine word enacts in history can fail. The word of Jesus on love of enemies (6:27-42) is seen as the only weapon which the small Christian communities of Luke's time possess to combat the forces of persecution. The word of God is the teaching of Jesus, to be planted in the hearts of men. And it is the function of the Christian community to confront humanity with this word, which undergoes vicissitudes but inevitably finds out those who will hear, believe and act.

Most scholars agree that Luke made use of Mark's Gospel as one of his sources. Some even consider it to be Luke's principal source, to which he added other material. In the view of others, Luke used Mark only as a supplementary source for rounding out the material he took from other traditions. Certainly, Luke's aim was not to improve upon Mark's account of the public ministry of Jesus, but rather to provide material for those like Theophilus, God's friends, desirous of living out the message of Jesus in the world.

Early Christian tradition ascribes the companion volumes of the Lucan gospel as ACTS of the Apostles to approximately 75 CE and identifies the author with Luke the physician, friend of St. Paul and mentioned by Paul in several of his letters to various communities.

Luke portrays Christianity not as a political



movement, nor as a sect organized for an initiated few, but as a religious faith open to all men. His portrait of Jesus, drawn from the gospel tradition, manifests the Savior's concern for humanity and His identification with the poor, the outcast and the criminal. Although the apologetic thought in Luke's writings must be acknowledged, it was nevertheless not his chief purpose to produce an apology for Christianity.

Luke, like Matthew, includes an "infancy" narrative not found in the gospels of Mark and John. Some believe that Luke was the physician who treated Mary, Jesus' Mother.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 64 No 52 Weekend After Christmas December 29-30 2018

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

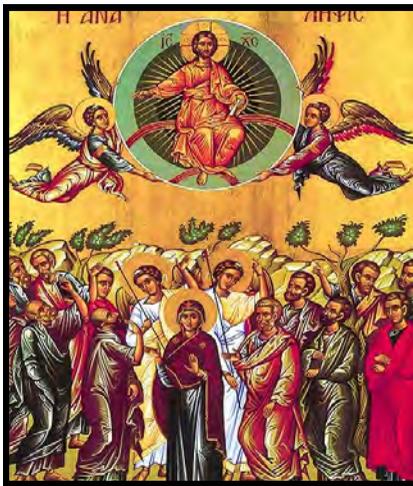
In the last issue of this article I suggested that Eastern Spirituality calls us to truly reflect upon the life of Jesus, attempt to identify how He thought and lived and then be committed to developing His way of thinking and behaving. That is true spirituality.

Indeed spirituality is all about allowing our *spiritual* nature to influence our *human* nature - to allow God's Spirit within us to guide and govern the way that we live and also behave. Again, the way that we think truly influences the way that we behave.

So we have to assess, first and foremost, how we think. I find that in our modern society it is very easy for Americans to "stereotype" and "judge" those that we think are our enemies. For example, how do you view Arabic People? They are cast as "terrorists" by our society. Is that how you see them? Also, how do you see

immigrants? Are they all criminals and people who want to rob us of our way of living?

I would remind you that many of our ancestors - in my case my father - was an immigrant who came to this country to find a better way of living. Are all the people who are truly seeking asylum in our country criminals? When I listen to our public discourse I sometimes think that all people think this way. We really have to think about how we think. Is this way of



Life's Journey Is an Ascension to the Heavenly Father

thinking the Jesus way of thinking? There were obviously people in His society that saw others as "enemies" who were trying to destroy their society. How did He see them? Did He hate the Samaritans and Romans? Did He stereotype them and judge them in mass?

I know that this touches a very sensitive Issue! Think about it!

The Flight into Egypt of the Holy Family

Egypt is situated to the southwest of Judea, and is distant from Bethlehem perhaps about 60 miles. It was at this time a Roman province. There were many Jews there, who had a temple and synagogues (see the notes at Isaiah 19:18), and Joseph, therefore, would be among his own countrymen, and yet beyond the reach of Herod.

The jurisdiction of Herod extended only to the River Sihon, or “river of Egypt,” and, of course, beyond that Joseph was safe from his designs. For a description

of Egypt, see the notes at Isaiah 19. It is remarkable that this is the only time in which our Saviour was out of Palestine, and that this was in the land where the children of Israel had suffered so much and so long under the oppression of the Egyptian kings. The very land which was the land of bondage and groaning for the Jews, became now the land of refuge and safety for the new-born King of Judea.

God can overturn nations and kingdoms, so that those whom he loves shall be safe anywhere.