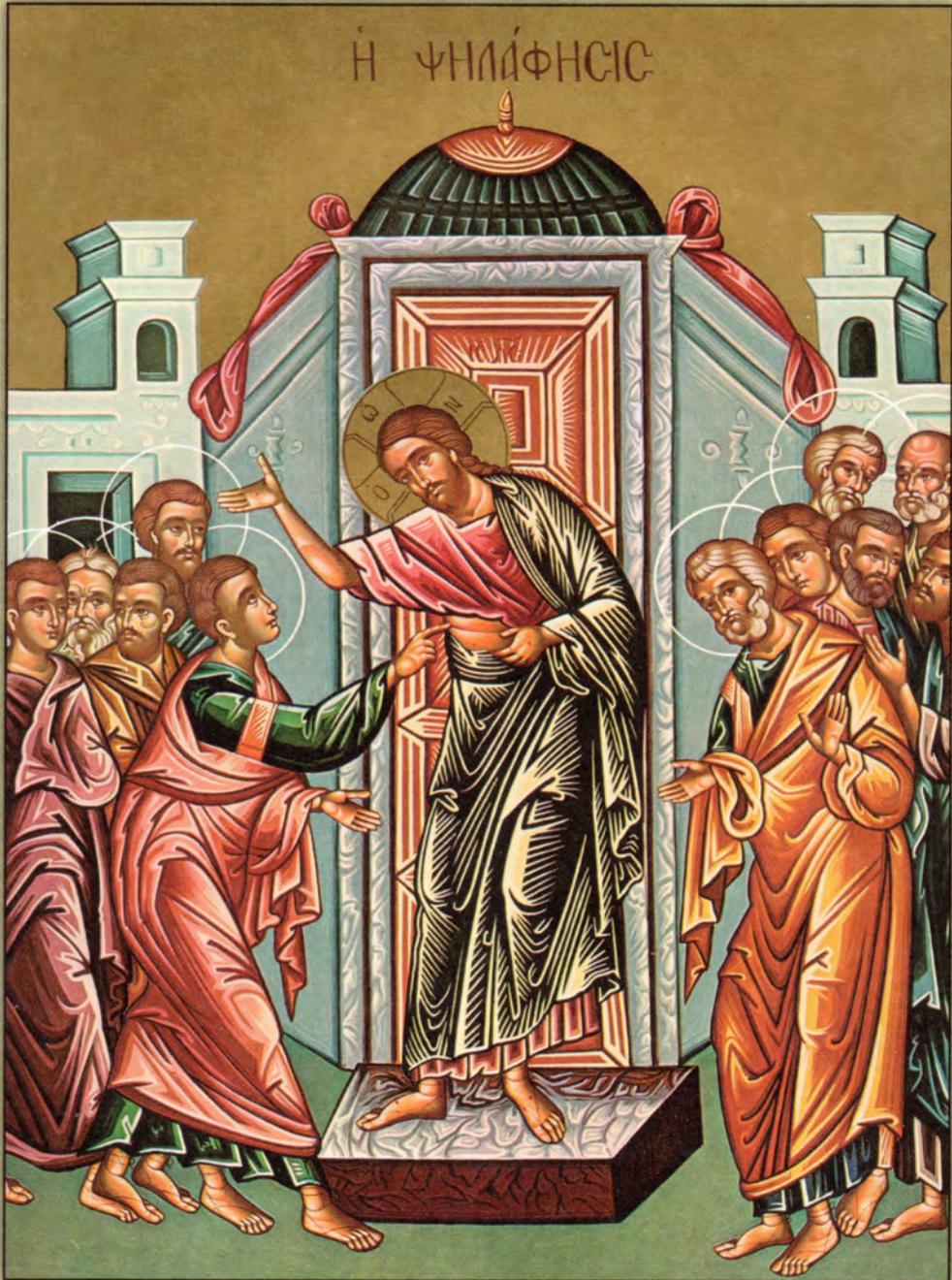


THOMAS SUNDAY



Icon of Saint Thomas and the Lord

A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

This weekend our readings are taken from the Acts of the Apostles, the early history of the Church, and St. Mark's Gospel. The Acts share the signs and wonders that were accomplished by the apostles after the death of Jesus and the second trial conducted by the Jewish Sanhedrin of the followers of Jesus. They raised questions about the "this new life" that Jesus had preached and that the apostles preached. It seems that the apostles continued the ministry of Jesus by curing people. This, of course, angered the leaders of the Jewish religion and they tried to stop the work of the apostles and stamp out the ministry of Jesus, the Christ. It clearly seems that the message of Jesus was a *new way of living*, that is a new way of looking at the relationship that exists between God

and man. The men that followed Jesus actively went out and professed their belief that Jesus presented a different way to enter into a relationship with God, the Creator and Lord of the universe. For wherever the reason, the apostles sensed that the message of

Jesus was very different from the message they received from their Jewish religion. And so they preached a different message to the people

Our Gospel reading presents the story of the first apparitions of the risen Christ to His apostles. It is centered around the BELIEF that Christ actually rose from the dead.

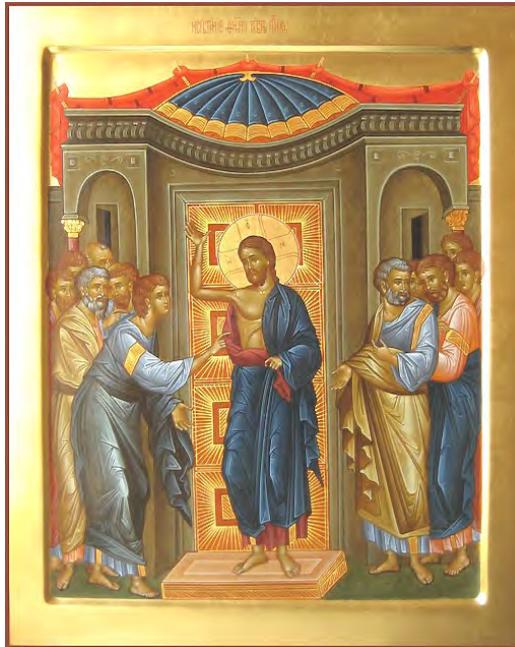
It is a wonderful story of how DISBELIEF was transformed into real BELIEF. The Church rightfully presents

this story right after the feast of the Lord's resurrection to encourage us to believe that Jesus was raised from the dead and, because He was a human, it tells us that we will be raised from the dead, telling us that life is IMMORTAL.

I know that it is difficult for us to believe that life is immortal, since we experience death as so final. It is only

with faith and belief that we can come to see that LIFE IS ETERNAL - the grave does not destroy us but, rather, it serves only as a transition from this life to a much greater life.

***Do you believe that LIFE IS ETERNAL?
If not, why not?***



THE SEASON OF HOLY PENTECOST

On the fortieth day after His glorious resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven and on the fiftieth day sent down the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. For this reason the fifty day period extended from Easter to the feast of Pentecost is called the season of Pentecost. This, of course, parallels the period between the Jewish Passover and the feast of Pentecost (the name of the Christian feast of Pentecost is taken from the Jewish Feast which means fifty).

Great feasts are usually celebrated for several days. Easter, because it is such a very important feast, is celebrated for forty days, that is until the feast of His Ascension. The weekend following Easter goes by several different names the weekend of *St. Thomas*, *Anti-Pasch*, *Renewal* or *Renovation*, *White*, or *Leading*. The first name, *St. Thomas*, is because of the Gospel story which is shared on this weekend. It calls us to belief in the risen Christ. The name *Anti-Pasch* is a Greek word signifying "in place of, instead of the Pasch". The name *Renewal* or *Renovation* is used to signify that the celebration of the

Pasch is celebrated again. The name *White* weekend is sometimes used because those who were baptized on Easter in the early Church wore their "white" baptismal garment throughout the entire Bright Week. And finally, the name *Leading* is used to introduce the 40 day celebration of Easter. It should

be noted that with this weekend the Church begins to observe Sunday as the **FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK**. This continues during the entire 40 day period. After the celebration of the Feast of Pentecost, Sunday becomes the **LAST DAY OF THE WEEK** in our Church.

It should also be noted that this past week, that is from Easter until this weekend, is called **BRIGHT WEEK**. This week is liturgically composed of eight days, the only eight day week in the year.

Our Church also celebrates the memory of St. Thomas on the 6th day of October. St. Thomas is believed to have died a martyr's death for the Christian faith in India.

Throughout this time from Easter to Pentecost, we stand in prayer and sing the Easter Tropar.



ST BASIL'S THOUGHTS ON GENESIS

Before Easter I began sharing the thoughts of Basil the Great on Genesis. While I realize that it might have been a little dense, but I believe valuable.

After Basil talks about God's "BREATH" or "LIFE" being sent over chaos to create he then starts a day-by-

day interpretation of the days of creation. On the first day, the day God created light, something changes. The change comes with a simple and sovereign word from God: **GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT, AND THERE WAS LIGHT.** In pagan mythologies, deities such as Marduk have to scheme and prepare and wage warfare to gain the victory and to

create. The Hebrew's God was utterly different: He needed only speak a short and simple word of command in order to create. He in fact creates the entire cosmos by uttering a short series of ten commands (of course foreshadowing the Ten Words or Ten Commandments), and His word is immediately obeyed.

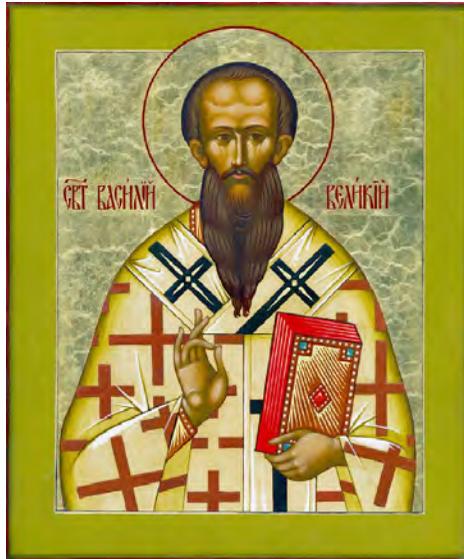
The pagan mythologies often portrayed conflict and war of deity against deity before the world's order could be created. There is nothing like

that here in Genesis. None could gainsay the word of God. He needed only to say "BE!" and it came to pass. It is true that in addition to speaking, God performed the actions of making, separating and setting, so that actions as well as words were involved. But the

general picture is one of sovereign decree, like a king issuing orders from a throne.

What was God making when He created light? All commentators have noted (some with chagrin) that the creation of light and of the day preceded the creation of the sun and the moon. Accordingly, some commentators have striven to find a

factual scientific equivalent for this pre-solar light, one of them saying that "this primeval light was probably electric, arising from the condensation and friction of the elements as they began to arrange themselves in order." The sacred text itself, however, is quite clear: this light was the daylight seen by all men when they woke up each morning. We see this in the name God bestowed upon the light, for He *called the light day, separating it from the darkness which he called night!*



ST BASIL THE GREAT

St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



OUR EASTER DINNER

Sviachenne

Next Week, May 5th



This year we will be doing something new for our Easter Dinner. We will

be going to

Cariera's Cucina Italiana

which is located between Ford and Warren Roads on Telegraph Road. There will a choice of four different meals and a cash bar. We must ask an offering of \$25 per person. Salad or soup and coffee are offered with the meal and we will be providing the dessert.

RESERVATIONS are an absolute MUST!

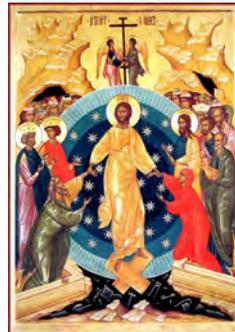
Please sign up today.

To make things easier, we can think about car-pooling from the church to the restaurant.

Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself

A CALL TO HOLINESS

As we continue our celebration of the Resurrection of Christ, the call to holiness is a call that exhorts us to think about and to believe in the revelation that it makes to us about human life. Because God took on human nature in the Person of Jesus, God revealed through Jesus the truth about us as human beings. Since Jesus was raised from the dead, the revelation is that the life that animates us human beings is God's own life which is, of course immortal and eternal.



This, however, cannot be proven. It is a matter of faith. So the big question is: Do we really believe this is true? That is why this dogma of our faith is a part of our call to holiness. When we choose to believe in this truth revealed to us by God, we declare our willingness to **TRUST GOD** and place **OUR HOPE IN HIM**. This is the foundation of true holiness.

During this past week we renewed our belief in how Jesus lived His life. He placed complete trust and hope in the Heavenly Father and, because of that, He was able to nobly and courageously endure the horrendous challenges that He had to face at the end of His life. His willingness to peacefully face His life's challenges, of course, gained Him resurrection from the dead.

The same will hold true for us if we only have the courage live like

(Continued on page 8)

THE RESURRECTION OF THE HUMAN BODY

I thought it might be timely, as we continue our celebration of the Lord's resurrection from the dead, to share some the thoughts of some of the Fathers of the Church about the resurrection of the human body. One of the Fathers, Cyril of Alexandria, stands out in his exposition of this idea.

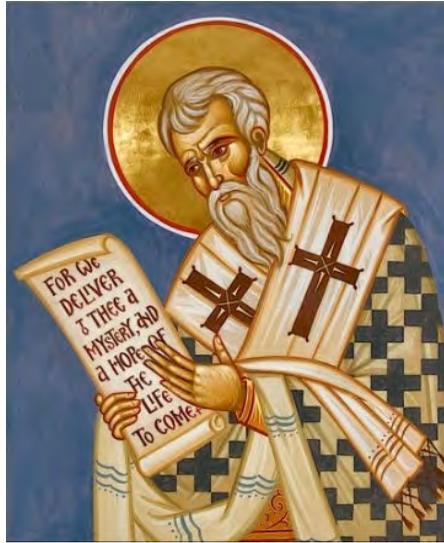
“Without the Resurrection”, said a holy man in the early church, “there is nothing.” Truly, Unless Christ be risen from the dead, unless the tomb of the Lord were found “empty”, the Christian *kerygma* (Good News) would indeed be useless. As Paul puts it: “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain”.

But why do the saints, especially Cyril, speak about the Resurrection in such uncompromising terms? Quite simply, because if the Resurrection of Christ is merely a beautiful metaphor, “then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished”, and “we are of all men most miserable”, for nothing but death and corruption - nothing but non-being - would await us.

Christians, however, *know* that Christ is risen; and they know that His Resurrection signifies our resurrection,

and so together with St Paul they affirm that “now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.... For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” The Resurrection of Christ the New Adam, then is a foreshowing of our own resurrection, of our intended place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

However, within the mystery of Christ's glorious Resurrection is also contained the mystery of the way in which we have been called to share in the very Life of God the Holy Trinity; and it is here that we arrive at the fundamental doctrine of the Church concerning the true



ST CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

resurrection of the body.

Put simply, the whole of our humanity - body as well as soul - has been called to live eternally with God. This is the significance of the salvific work of Christ: that by His Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension, Christ has raised human nature to the right hand of God the Father, to the level of Divine Being.

Significantly, the only human person, the only human hypostasis thus far
(Continued on page 7)

THE RESURRECTION OF THE HUMAN BODY

(Continued from page 6 - Bodily Resurrection)

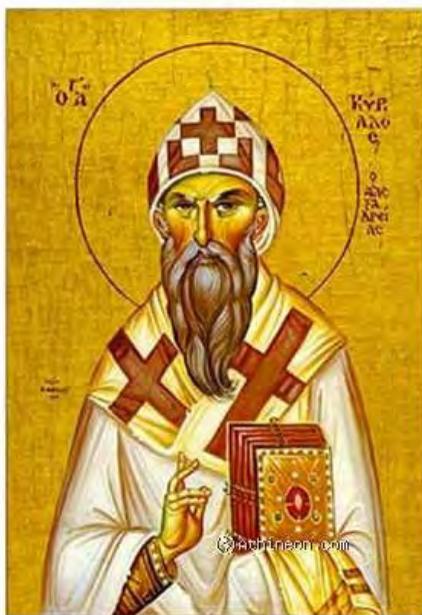
to have achieved this blessed state is, of course, the Most Holy Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, through whom the Son and Word of God became flesh.

We have I say “significantly”, because any attempt to look a little more closely at the question of the resurrection of the body, we must turn briefly to Cyril of Alexandria, for it was he who first defended the Holy Virgin as Theotokos (Birthgiver or Mother of God) against the Nestorians - those who falsely taught that Christ was merely a man in whom the divine Logos dwelt. It is no coincidence, then, that any inquiry into this subject must include St. Cyril Alexandria, for the theme of human bodily resurrection is truly and inextricably intertwined with any appreciation of the Holy Virgin Mary.

Interestingly, Cyril refers not to the Resurrection but to the Transfiguration as the clearest recorded manifestation that we have of that reward, or glory which the righteous - those who take up their Cross and follow Christ - will receive at the General Resurrection. Cyril described this reward in terms of “participation in

eternal life and glory”, and “vision of glory”; interchangeable terms which describe the life of the Kingdom. For Cyril, the vision of Christ transfigured is perceived as a prefiguration of the participation of the saints in the glorious life of the Kingdom, which will be inaugurated at the Parousia.

A little further on in the same work, Cyril suggests that Peter’s words might have been due to his mistaking the Transfiguration for the end of the world and the *Kairos* of the promised participation of the righteous in the Life of God. He goes on to explain, however, that this could not have taken place at that particular time, since Christ had not yet completed His redemptive work. Man was, therefore, still



ST CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

subject to the power of death and corruption and consequently incapable of enduring the revelation of Christ’s divine glory.

This point brings us directly to the significance of the resurrection of the body of Christ: In his *Commentary on John*, Cyril refers explicitly to the reason for Christ’s appearance to Thomas.

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
586.755.3129

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 April 28 - The Anti-Pasch - St. Thomas Day
10:00 AM - Eva Papinchak; Bob & Corinne Boyko

THOMAS WEEK

Monday, April 29 - Nine Holy Martyrs of Cyzice
No Service Scheduled

Tuesday, April 30 - James the Greater, Apostle
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Wednesday May 1 - Jeremiah, Prophet
No Service Scheduled

Thursday, May 2 - Athanasius the Great, Patriarch
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Friday, May 3 - Passing of Theodosius of the Cave, Venerable
No Service Scheduled

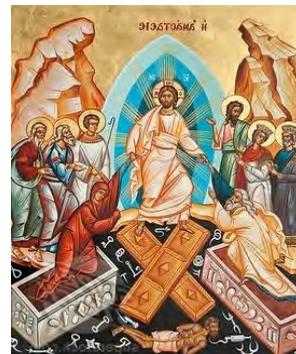
Saturday, May 4 - Pelagia, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Sunday, May 5 - Weekend of the Ointment Bearers
10:00 AM - Mary & Catherine Mihalko; Kotlinski Family

(Continued from page 5 - A Call)

Jesus did. I don't know about you, but I would rather embrace a belief in eternal life than to just think that this life is all there is. It makes more sense that God creates us and calls us into existence so that we might, for all eternity, offer Him praise and thanksgiving.

Why would we create us in His image and give us the potential to grow in His likeness if, after years of struggle, we only dissolve into nothingness. Makes absolutely no sense to me. Therefore I choose to believe that He created us so that He might express His love for us and, hopefully, receive our love in return. That is a more sensible belief than the belief that there is nothing after this earthly existence.



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

MORE ABOUT HOLY SCRIPTURES: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Before the feast of the Resurrection, I began a series of articles on the Gospel of St. Mark since our readings were taken from his gospel. I would not turn to St. John's Gospel since our gospel readings during this period will be taken from his gospel. You will recall, if you were able to attend our Easter service, that we read from his gospel. It is touted as the **NEW GENESIS**, since Christ is seen as the **WORD OF GOD** which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, has brought all things into existence.

The writer of the fourth Gospel does not name himself in the text. Like the other three gospels, the fourth Gospel is anonymous. The

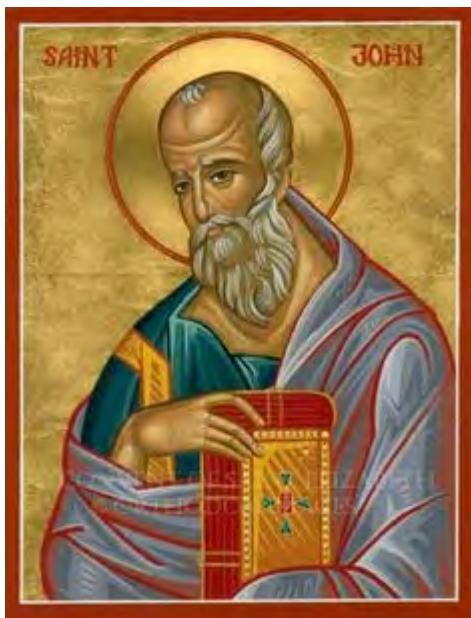
inscription "The Gospel According to John" or "According to John" (as found in the some ancient manuscripts) was added to the text by the early Church.

Yet in a curious way the fourth Gospel is less anonymous than the other three because the writer identifies himself in the final chapter by way of a title. He calls himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved". Who then is this mysterious disciple who wanted

to be known only in terms of this relationship to Jesus?

He must have been one of the twelve original disciples because he was present at the Last Supper. In fact, the beloved disciple was "reclining next to" Jesus. This gives us a valuable

clue as to his identity: He was probably one of the three (occasionally four) disciples who were closest to Jesus - Peter, James, John and sometimes Andrew. We know that the person reclining next to Jesus was not Peter, because Peter asked this disciple a question. The person was probably not Andrew, since Andrew is explicitly named several times in the



ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

text; it would be strange to name a disciple in some places and to list him anonymously in others as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Most of the other disciples are also named in this gospel. Some have suggested Lazarus as author of the fourth Gospel because in 11:5 Jesus is said to have loved him, but Lazarus is named in chapters 11-12. Of all the possible candidates,

(Continued on page 10)

MORE ABOUT HOLY SCRIPTURES: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

(Continued from page 9 - John's Gospel)

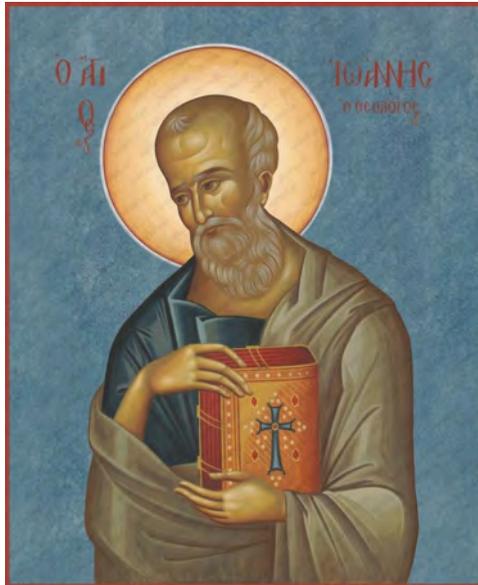
Only the sons of Zebedee (James and John) are not names in the fourth Gospel. The beloved disciple could not have been James, since he died at the hands of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:2) early in the development of the church, and the fourth Gospel was written years after his death. Therefore, the most likely candidate is his brother John.

Indeed, early church tradition is unanimous that John the apostle, the son of Zebedee, wrote the fourth Gospel. For example, toward the end of the second century Irenaeus wrote: "Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.

What, then, do we know about John the apostle? First, we know that he and his brother James, along with Peter and his brother Andrew, were the first four disciples called by Jesus. Furthermore, James and John seem inseparable. On only one occasion is John recorded as acting alone (Luke

9:49-50). Together the two brothers want to call down fire on a village (Luke 9:54). Together they earn the title from Jesus of "Sons of Thunder." The two of them request to be seated on Jesus' right and left in the coming kingdom. They are both with Jesus on the Mount

of Transfiguration, in Gethsemane, and when Jesus raised Jarius' daughter from the dead. John is right at the very heart of Jesus' life and ministry. He of all the disciples is qualified to give the world a glimpse of Jesus' deepest thoughts and profound concerns. We must also take into account that Jesus, from His Cross, commended His Mother Mary to the



St. John the Evangelist

care of St. John.

As is so often the case with books of the Bible, it is not possible to give an exact date for the writing of John's gospel. Most scholars agree that it was the last of the four gospels to be written. It was probably composed in 80 or 90 CE, though it may have been written shortly after the fall of the city of Jerusalem in 70 CE.

Pick up John's Gospel and begin to read!



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.

Vol. 65 No 17

Weekend of St. Thomas

April 27-28, 2019

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

The spirituality of the Christian East is centered around the resurrection of Christ. This great mystery truly presents our understanding of our relationship with God as the Creator. It tells us that God has chosen, as expressed through Jesus, that we should know that life is eternal - that this human life that we experience is none-other-than God's own eternal life shared with us. This is a very important message. Do you truly believe that the lifeforce within you is truly the very lifeforce of God? I believe that it is critical that we think about ourselves as "connected with God" in a very intimate and intrinsic way. When we truly feel that we are connected with God, life changes. We are no longer just things that have been created and left-adrift in the universe. Rather, we are beings who have been created in the image of the Creator and given the potential to grow in our likeness of God's image, Jesus Christ.



Christian East is truly presents our relationship with God us that God has through Jesus, that life is eternal - that we experience is

When God created us, He made sure that that we had the potential to become the people He created us to be - He created us in the image and likeness of Jesus, the God-Man. He gave us the ability to achieve greater union with Him if we attempt to model our lives after the life of Jesus, His only-begotten Son and the model for what humans can and should grow to be like.

He came Himself in the Person of Jesus to show us how to live in order to truly benefit from the experiences of life. Life can become much more beneficial for our spiritual growth when we come to the realization that life is not designed to punish us but, rather, to help us to grow. Do you believe this?

What we believe greatly influences the way we live. If we choose to believe that God gave us Jesus as a model for living life, then we will be assured that life will be rewarding and beneficial to our spiritual growth. When we believe that Jesus is our model for living, we begin to truly see the MEANING AND PURPOSE OF LIFE - to understand the reason for our creation. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?

Incorruptible but Touchable

The Lord's body that made its entrance to the disciples through closed doors was the same as that which issued before the eyes of people from the Virgin's closed womb at His birth.

Is it surprising that He who was now going to live forever made His entrance through closed doors after His resurrection, who on His coming in order to die made His appearance from the unopened womb of a virgin?

But because the faith of those who beheld it wavered concerning the body they could see, He showed them at once His hands and His side, offering them the body that He brought in through the closed doors to touch.

By this action He revealed two wonderful and, according to human reason, quite contradictory things. He showed them that after His resurrection His body was both incorruptible and yet could be touched ...

By showing us that it is incorruptible, He would urge us on toward our reward, and by offering it as touchable He would dispose us toward faith.

He manifested Himself as both incorruptible and touchable to show us that His body after His resurrection was of the same nature as ours but of a different sort of glory.

St. Gregory the Great