

SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN



Icon of Christ with the Samaritan Woman

A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this fourth weekend of our forty day celebration of the Lord's Resurrection from the Dead, our readings are taken again from the ACTS and John's Gospel. At first blush there doesn't seem to be a common theme joining the teaching of these two readings.

The reading from ACTS relates the establishment of the Church at Antioch, adding the exclamation that it was in Antioch that the disciples were called Christians for the first time. The passage also highlights, however, the fact that it was at Antioch that the disciples began to talk "even to the Greeks" and that news of this eventually reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem which resulted in Barnabas being sent to Antioch. Barnabas eventually went to Tarsus and brought Paul back to the city to preach.

The Gospel reading, which is probably one of the longest that we use during this period, is a story of how Jesus passed through Samaria and, on His journey, encountered a Samaritan woman and engaged in a conversation with her. The story ends by relating that Many Samaritans from the town "believed in Him" (Jesus) on the strength of the woman's word of testimony: "He told me everything I ever did." The townsfolk told the woman: "no longer does our faith depend on your story. We have heard for ourselves, and we know that this really is the Savior of the world."

So what is the common thread that brings these two readings together? That the message of Christ - the Good News - is



is meant for all people, not just a special group. This was quite a change from the religion of the Jews and the intent of the early Church. It was not until Paul that the disciples of Christ preached the Good News to people other than Jews. As a result, the it became evident that God wished to share a revelation to all of humankind, not just a select group.

Jesus, the human image of God, shared with humankind how to live in order to become all that God intended when He created humankind. As a result, Christianity became a "way of living" for all humans.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE HUMAN BODY

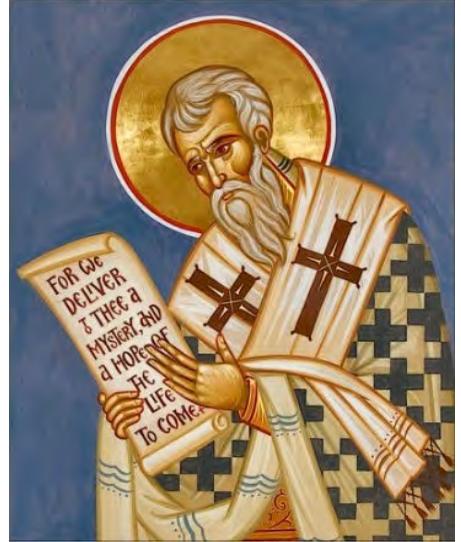
Cyril describes the mystery of the Resurrection of Christ's body in this manner:

If His dead body had not risen, what kind of death was vanquished, and how was the power of corruption rendered powerless? Not by the death of one of the rational creatures, by a soul, or by an angel, nor even by that of the Word of God Himself. Since, therefore, the power of death extends only over that which is by nature corruptible, it is with respect to this [the body] that the power of the Resurrection should reasonably be understood.

The resurrection of the human flesh of Christ - soul and body - is thus an absolute prerequisite for the Salvation of man. In Cyril physical death is understood as "the exodus of the human soul from the body," and as a result of this exodus of the soul it is the body which suffers corruption. It is not the soul, therefore, but the body which, being of its nature corruptible, is in need of being rendered incorruptible. Thus, by the Death and Resurrection of the body of Christ, the power of corruption was "rendered powerless." Hence, the Holy Body which the Apostle Thomas was allowed to touch, bears witness to the future resurrection of our own bodies in incorruption.

This, of course, is something that we must take with "faith"! There is nothing we have ever experienced which can give proof to this. We can only believe it.

Furthermore, the glory of the body of Christ as revealed at the Transfiguration is regarded as a preview of His Resurrection glory, not as it was revealed to St. Thomas and the others immediately following the Resurrection, but as it was revealed to them from the Ascension onwards.



ST CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

This does not mean, of course, that the body of Christ had not already been glorified at the time of the Resurrection. On the contrary, Cyril maintains that Christ, if He so desired, could have revealed His body in "its due and proper glory" immediately following His Resurrection, but that His disciples would not have been able to bear such a manifestation before Christ's Ascension to the Father - before, that is, the disciples had received the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

***What is it that you truly believe?
This is our belief!***

ST BASIL'S THOUGHTS ON GENESIS



ST BASIL THE GREAT

The ancients did not regard the sun as the sole source of light, since they experienced light even before the full sunrise. It did not confound them to think of daylight being created before the creation of the sun. It is a mistake, rooted in hubris, for us to insist that the Scriptures speak to us in conformity with our modern scientific understanding of the world. The sacred text spoke the language used by all the other ancient creation stories, that of poetry and metaphor - in other words, the language of mythology. A myth can be variously defined. Later New Testament usage, commenting

on the myths of pagans and gnostics, would define a myth as a silly, untrue tale, unworthy of serious consideration. Here *myth* refers to the way ancients told stories that tried to make sense of their world. In this definition, a myth is not an untrue tale but a story with a truth so big it cannot fit into a single historical event

Realizing that the Genesis creation stories speak the language of mythology gives us the key to understanding things that might otherwise puzzle us. Were there really water and submerged land in the world before creation? Were there really daylight and nighttime and evenings and mornings before the sun was made? Did God really need light to work? Did He stop working when evening came? Was the whole world really created in six twenty-four-hour days? Discerning that Genesis uses mythological language enables us to hear what it is really saying. It is not teaching science or addressing itself to modern scientific questions. It is saying something much more important. It reveals that our God is the One who made everything and who presides over it all.

DAY TWO. "And God said, Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse "heavens". And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

Hopefully the ideas of Basil helps all reject a fundamental interpretation of Genesis.

St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



ADULT DISCUSSION

Sunday June 2nd

On this weekend, we will have the pleasure to have two of our members, Deacon Candidate Len Mier and Dr. Tony Grech, lead a discussion on

END OF LIFE ISSUES

a very important topic in our modern world. I hope that members will take this opportunity to join us in this Adult Discussion Session.

GRAVE BLESSINGS

Holy Sepulchre Cemetary

Pentecost, June 9th @ 2PM

St. Hedwig's Cemetary

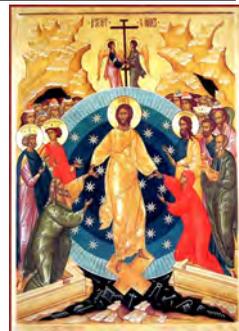
All Saints, June 16th @ 1PM

At each cemetery we first meet at the mausoleum for a general PANAHYDA and then go to individual graves for a blessing.

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself

A CALL TO HOLINESS

As we continue our journey together the call to holiness continues to evolve. It is all about "personal change" to more and more take on the characteristics of Jesus Christ. The journey of life is about becoming more like Jesus. He is God's revelation to



us on how to live as human beings. He showed us how to meet the challenges of life and also give ourselves to the service of others. He never allowed His life's challenges to get in the way of being of service to others.

During the Great and Holy Week we heard about how He, even in the midst of his agony and suffering, allowed Himself to think about others. So there is something in this "thinking about others that is critical to our spiritual development". It is not a matter of ability. It is a matter of "will" and "desire". If you truly want to think about others and see this as the route to spiritual development, you will do it.

The problem is I wonder whether we really want to think about our spiritual development? Too often we don't realize the importunate, during this earthly life, of our spiritual development. This is the meaning and purpose of this earthly life. We are not here for any other reason than to grow spirituality. Why have we been born into this world? To face the challenges of life and to spiritually grow by the way that we

(Continued on page 8)

OUR MOST IMPORTANT DOCTRINE: THE TRIUNE GOD

The Latin West adopted a different approach to Trinitarian theology, and the contrast has been well expressed by Theodore de Regnon: "Latin philosophy considers the nature in itself first and proceeds to the agent; Greek philosophy considers the agent first and passes through it to find the nature. The Latins think of personality as a mode of nature; the Greeks think of nature as the content of the person." Practically speaking, the difference of emphasis means that in both the *lex orandi* (the law of praying) and the *lex credenda* (the law of believing) of Byzantine Christianity, the Trinity remained a primary and concrete experience; the unity of God's nature was an article of faith, coupled always with an insistence on the absolute unknowability of the divine essence. In the West, however, especially since the time of Augustine, the unity of the divine being served as the starting point of Trinitarian theology. Obviously, as long as the two schools of thought remained open to dialogue and mutual understanding, they could have truly developed in a real complementary way. Unfortunately, the bitter polemics of the *filioque* issue led to a stiffening of positions and became one of the major causes of the schism. The modern crisis of deism, the increasing difficulty faced by modern theologians in explaining and justifying the being of God as a philosophically definable entity, may prove helpful, not only in solving the medieval controversy between East and



West, but also in the revival of a more authentic Trinitarianism. "It would seem that in our time," writes Theodore de Regnon, "the dogma of the divine unity had, as it were, absorbed the dogma of the Trinity of which one only speaks as a memory. But the "dogma of the divine unity" is being challenged by that of the "death of God"; hence, there is a return to an existential and experiential approach to the doctrine of God, seen in the context of salvation history; "without our experience of Father, Son and Spirit in salvation history we would ultimately be unable to conceive at them as one Being.

END OF LIFE ISSUES BY DEACON CANDIDATE LEN MIER, JR

This is a continuation of the article written by our Deacon Candidate in fulfillment of one of the requirements for his preparation as a deacon.

Those who were faithful to the Father's will before the incarnation, the just in the Lord, along with we baptized believers, are now free of the separation from God and united again with God. Christ went into Hades, the place where the just in the Lord were at rest, on the Sabbath, the day of rest, of worship and thanks for the creation of God. Christ's descent into Hades is now the fullness of rest in God, and the start of the new creation.

Chrysostom says Hades was embittered. I think a better word for this translation is estranged. The death of Christ caused the removal from a customary environment, from a certain familiarity that is, it removed us from Hades and the separation from God. We no longer have this affection or attraction to things outside the will of God as we did when we wanted to gain knowledge outside of God's plan for us. Christ surrendered his life transiting human nature to be more in line with God's will and His divine nature. We started this transition with baptism, when we entered into Christ's death. It is our physical death that is just another transitional step to further align us with God's will which is a new life and new start with God. In this new way of existence, we see God face to

face, just as Hades saw God face to face when Christ descended there.

The final transition to a new life started with the resurrection of Christ on the third day, Pascha, when Christ rose from the grave in a glorified body. We celebrate this new life and new creation every year. In this new life the true meaning of death is becoming closer to God. Our new life will be brought to completeness with our resurrection on the last day and the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God, when we too will experience the fullness of life in the kingdom with our own glorified bodies in the image of Christ's glorified body.

The topic of "End of Life Issues" is, I believe, very important in our modern age. Modern medicine, frequently, encourages us to maintain the life of a loved person because it is possible. The problem with this is that it postulates the belief that this life is the only thing that is real. Earthly life is not, according to our faith, the only thing that exists. There IS LIFE AFTER DEATH, according to our belief. So how should we, as Christians, deal with the "End issues" of life. Should we automatically embrace the medical model of sustaining life at all costs? Is that what God wants? Is that what we should strive for? I think that a discussion about this topic is very relevant and very timely. I thank Len for this Article.

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, May 19 - Weekend of the Samaritan Woman
10:00 AM - Special Intention

FIFTH PASCHAL WEEK

Monday, May 20 - Thalaleus & Others, Martyrs
No Service Scheduled

Tuesday, May 21 - Constantine & Helen, Equals to the Apostles
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Wednesday May 22 - Basiliscus, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Thursday, May 23 - Michae3l of Synnada, Bishop-Confessor
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Friday, May 24 - Simeon, Venerable
No Service Scheduled

Saturday, May 25 - 3rd Finding of John the Baptizer's Head
No Service Scheduled

Sunday, May 26 - Weekend of the Man Born Blind
10:00 AM - Special Intention

(Continued from page 5 - the Call to holiness)

respond to the challenges of life. Christ's revelation to us was most profound when we think about how He responded to the challenges that were presented to Him around His death. He faced betrayal, rejection, unjust accusations an horrendous torture for us to see how to live this earthly life. He did all of this without bitterness or despair. He merely endured all of His suffering to show us how to live life. And He declared, by His actions, that it is possible for humans to rise to this level of acceptance without becoming depressed or feel that God has abandoned us. The challenges of life are meant to help us personal change our lives.



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

MORE ABOUT HOLY SCRIPTURES: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

It is not clear how John's gospel ought to be subdivided. It is an incredibly rich, complex and fluid piece of writing in which various themes operate at different levels.

Still, most scholars agree that John's gospel begins with a distinct prologue and then divides into two major parts. In fact, many see the first part, the Prologue, as a **NEW GENESIS** - a new interpretation of the creation story. This is why we read this on Easter. It is a declaration that it was through Christ, the Word of God, that creation came into existence in the Holy Spirit. It is as if the Father had the thought of creation, the Son put this thought into words - made creation conform to the thoughts of the Father, and the Holy Spirit brought it all into reality. This follows that all of the Father's ideas are made real through the Son, His Word, in the Holy Spirit.

The first part of the gospel, other than the Prologue, concentrates on Jesus *public ministry*. It is organized around his miracles, "signs" that reveal who he really is. This part

covers most of the three years of Jesus' ministry.

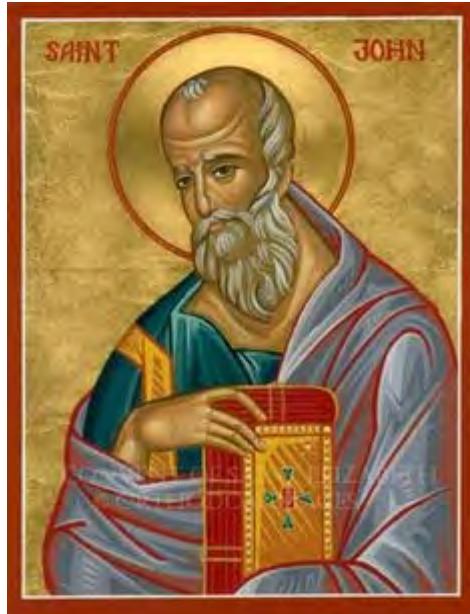
In the second part, the focus shifts from the crowds to the disciples and Jesus' *private ministry* among them. The theme in this section is the *glory* that is revealed in Jesus' crucifixion

and resurrection. The time period of this part is short: from the Thursday night of the Last Supper and all that took place there and the subsequent events that led up to His crucifixion and then post-resurrection appearances.

Additional themes run through the book. For example, the material is grouped around the major Jewish feasts. Also, the idea of the passion of Jesus is

throughout. It is also a gospel that is filled with the "love" of the disciple, called the "beloved", for the person of Jesus.

It is maintained that John was the youngest of the disciples of Jesus. He lived longer than all the other disciples or Apostles and had, according to Tradition, this absolutely extraordinary relationship with Mary, the Mother of Jesus.



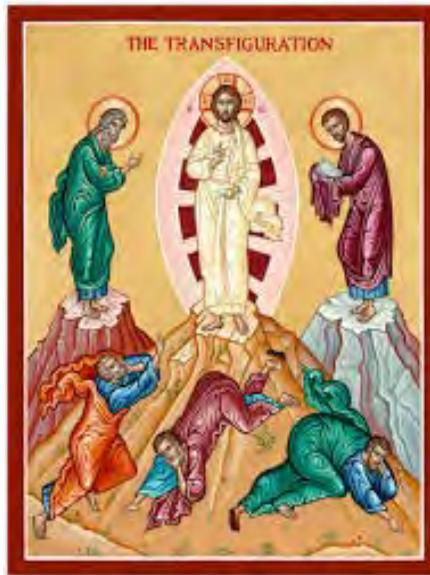
ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

REFORMING THEOSIS

The doctrine of THEOSIS is clearly established within the Eastern branch of Christendom and to this day remains the central motif uniting various aspects of Byzantine theology, from theology proper to anthropology. But what of the Latin West? I include this article because of the fact that we are Catholic, that is in union with the Western Church. This does not, however, mean that we give up our Eastern theology.

The West has historically given far more attention to moral holiness and so has focused on the elimination of sin as *culpa* rather than on salvation as liberation from moral corruption. While the theme of THEOSIS is not a dominant one in the West, it is not without its supporters. As one recent author reminds us: “although the West does not embrace the explicit notion of THEOSIS in any major way, deification is not entirely absent from its tradition.” THEOSIS - the deification of the human person - can and indeed must be seen to be compatible with Reformed Theology, itself a member of the Great Tradition to which all three streams of Christendom ultimately appeal.

According to Reformed scholars, union with Christ is at the heart of Reformed theology. While various theologians debate where exactly union with Christ “fits” into the *ordo salutis* (i.e., the order of salvation), it is certain that it is truly an integral component. While union with God and THEOSIS are not identical they are closely related. In her study of the patristic use of THEOSIS, Anna Williams concludes that:



There is affirm core that distinguishes this doctrine from some other models of sanctification First, we can safely say that where we find references to human participation in divine life, there we assuredly have a claim specifically of THEOSIS. This kind of claim regarding participation in divine life is carefully to

be distinguished, however, from the idea of divine indwelling in the human person... A second infallible marker of the doctrine, then, is the union of God and humanity, when this union is conceived as humanity’s incorporation into God, rather than God’s into humanity.

According to this well-reasoned definition, a Reformed doctrine of union with Christ is compatible with a doctrine of THEOSIS.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

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

Vol. 65 No 20

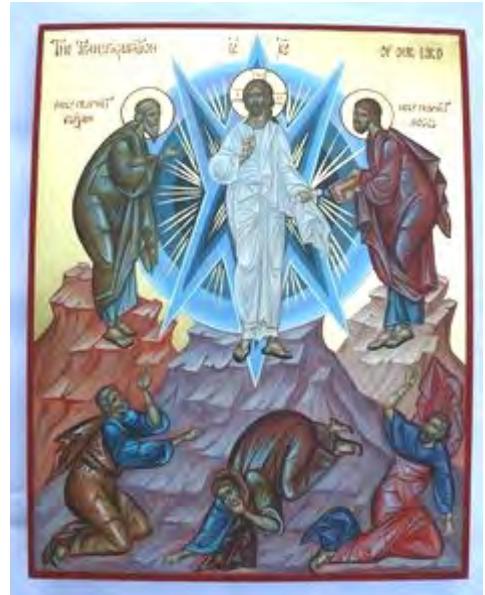
Weekend of the Samaritan Woman

May 18-19, 2019

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

According to Gregory of Nyssa, within the Holy Trinity here is a “unity of *nature* but a distinction between *hypostases*.” There is, therefore, a very healthy theological balance in the Eastern doctrine of salvation between Christology and pneumatology. As one theologian has stated, the examples can be easily multiplied, which show that the Byzantine theological tradition is constantly aware that in the “economy” of creation and salvation the Son and the Spirit are accomplished in one single divine act - without, however, being subordinated to one another in their hypostatic or personal existence. The “head” of the new, redeemed humanity is, of course, Christ, but the Spirit is not only Christ’s agent: He is in the words of John of Damascus: “Spirit of God, direct, ruling, the fountain of wisdom, life and holiness; God existing and addressed along with the Father and Son; uncreated, full, creative, all-ruling, all-effecting, all-powerful, of infinite power, Lord of all creation and not subject to any; deifying, not deified; filling, not filled; shared in, not sharing in; sanctifying, not sanctified.

I have shared this to indicate that in the Eastern Tradition, unity with God is effected by the process of deification, that is, growing in the likeness of Jesus Christ with the power



THE TRANSFIGURATION

of the Holy Spirit Who is within us. Christ is God’s revealed model that we are called to imitate. The Holy Spirit is God’s power, given to us out of love, to help us actualize the innate potential we have to grow in our likeness of Jesus. It is God’s desire that we become all that He created us to be and so He has spared nothing to help us achieve this. *Do You believe this?*

The Samaritan Woman

The Fourth Gospel, attributed to Saint John the Evangelist, is used exclusively from Easter until Pentecost for the Sunday readings. The first chapter of John's Gospel is the proclamation used for the Divine Liturgy on Easter itself. This week, we are reminded of the story of Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, and thereby Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament. In one of the many unique stories of the Fourth Gospel not found in the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark or Luke), Jesus reveals himself as Messiah to this woman of Samaria and talks with her about the "water that I will give will become ... a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

In the early days of His ministry, Jesus travels back and forth between Galilee and Jerusalem, and must pass through Samaria. The Samaritans

were outcast Jews because they were not subject to the Babylonian exile of the Israelites from other provinces. Therefore, when Jesus talks with this Samaritan woman, His disciples are surprised and in shock that He would carry on a conversation with a woman at the well, let alone a Samaritan. But as the story is explained, the woman's testimony about Jesus spreads through the nearby town, and because of her many come to hear His teachings. After hearing His word, they come to believe in Him, and proclaim Him "the Savior of the world." (Jn 4:42)

With water as the focal point of this encounter, we are once again reminded of our Baptism, and that Christ's Baptism is that of "eternal life" through "living water."

Archbishop Vsevolod of Scopelos