



SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Icon of the Call of the First Apostles

A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this second weekend after the feast of Pentecost, our readings are taken from Paul's Letter to the Romans and St. Matthew's Gospel. Our readings will be taken from these two sources until the end of July.

Paul's words to the Romans, and therefore to us, is that the demands of the God's law - that of loving and forgiving others as we want to be loved and forgiven - are actually written in our hearts. He suggests that we humans have an instinct about what is right and wrong. This does not mean, however, that we always follow our instinct. (If we think about it, most living beings have an "instinctive" nature. They do things by instinct). He refers to this as the "interior law". It is God's Spirit within us attempting to help us navigate this earthly life.

The Gospel passage we hear is actually Matthew's version of the calling of the first disciples. This is not the version recounted by Mark. In Matthew's version, Peter and Andrew are seen by Jesus fishing and are called at the same time. Mark's version is that Andrew, who was a disciple of John the Baptizer, follows Jesus at John's suggestion and then later calls his brother Peter to join him. In Matthew's version, James and John are called also at the same time.

This only indicates that the gospels are not meant to be accurate history. In each version, Jesus tells those



called that if they follow Him, He will make them "fishers of men." This is an important image, I believe. If we follow Jesus we are called, by the way that we live our lives, to attract others to belief in Jesus. Our purpose as Christians is not to just embrace our faith for ourselves but, rather, to also bear witness to the world of the love of God for humanity as He expressed it through the Person of Jesus.

People were attracted to following Jesus and later became His disciples, because they saw how the disciples lived - how they treated others. Jesus taught His disciples to first treat others, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances, as brothers or sisters and to do all in their power to help others.

Guess what? If we call ourselves followers of Jesus, don't we have the same obligation as the disciples did to make God's Kingdom real by the way we choose to treat others?

ON THE UNITY OF CHRIST

There is much support and defense for Cyril's **hypostatic union of the two natures**. For Cyril, **Christ was at once Divine and human, inseparably so.**

Cyril's favorite analogy of the union of the Divinity and Humanity in Christ is consequently a way of union of body and soul in humanity. For Cyril the image of the soul and body expressed the two separate natures, which can be intertwined with one another without damaging the reality of both. This definitely was an important Christological principle for Cyril. Cyril conveys this throughout his discussion in the treatise. He writes

We must admit of course, that the body which He united to Himself was endowed with a rational soul, for the Word, who is God would hardly neglect our finer part, the soul and have regard only for the earthly body.

In another section of the text, Cyril shows the aspect of body and soul from a response to a question from his friend: "even though Christ is not homogenized but really composed of two things, soul and body". McGuckin would quite clearly agree to this claim by stating Cyril's thought as: 'the analogy of the soul and body of man would demonstrate that two distinct subjects can be united together without destroying or compromising the integrity of the other.' Cyril would assert that such a union of the two realities trigger a dynamic interpretation. Cyril declares whatever a human person would undertake with the body and soul would do so through an uninterrupted unification.

McKinnon seems to have the same opinion with that of Cyril and would show that the union of Christ is an image of body



ST CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

and soul. The Word of God is united ineffably to flesh endowed with a rational human soul, and there is consequently one Son, Christ and Lord.

The union of the two natures not only shows a way of the soul and body unity, but echoes also a manner of **God incarnate suffering** and not in His Divine nature. Through the hypostatic unity Christ is able to sanction His human nature to undergo suffering without conflicting His Divinity. Cyril supports such a claim in that the Word of God suffers in His human state and that His divine nature remains impassible.

ST BASIL'S THOUGHTS ON GENESIS



ST BASIL THE GREAT

In the last issue of this article I introduced DAY FOUR of the Genesis story of creation. The bible text continues: And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

Continuing His work of filling the world with all that mankind needed, we note this last detail - the great luminaries were to give light *upon the earth*, not outwardly to the skies. All of God's

handiwork was created for us - for the animals and for mankind, who would live upon the earth. So, God made the two great lights (the sun and the moon) as well as the stars. Though the stars were mentioned (how could anyone miss them, looking up at the sky at night? - at least anyone not blinded by urban glare), the main emphasis clearly falls on the sun and the moon.

These lights are described as the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. It is clear why the narrator refused to use the usual terms for these lights (in Hebrew the *shamash* and the *yarih*). For the pagan peoples, these were the names of gods, and the narrator did not want to give the impression that he was describing the creation of the sun god and the moon god (the *Enuma Elish* was replete with descriptions of such divine births). Such works as the *Enuma Elish* described the creation of gods in matter-of-fact terms, and the author of Genesis was determined not to give the impression that he was doing the same. The mighty sun therefore became in this narrative merely the greater light and the glorious moon merely the lesser light. He describes them as ruling the day and the night respectively, since "to rule" then simply meant "to preside over and to allow activity to occur." The sun and the moon therefore were not gods, but mere lamps, made to give light to the world.

They were also created for signs and for seasons and for days and years. So you see Genesis was written in the context of many other pagan writings.

St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



SUMMER

Summertime is always a very difficult time for most parishes. The expenses do not necessarily diminish but attendance does. Our expenses do not lessen just because we have fewer people. I would encourage all of our members to remember that we have need of your support during the summer months just, if not more, than we do during the winter months. Thank you for supporting our parish!

A NEW METROPOLITAN

We have a new Metropolitan Archbishop:

BORYS GUDZIAK

Born in Syracuse New York, he is 58 years old and was the former bishop of the Eparchy of Paris. May God Grant Him MANY YEARS.

Obstacles are those things you see when you take your eyes off the goal

A CALL TO HOLINESS

During this post-Pentecost time period I believe that the call to holiness is a call to discover God's Spirit within us. This is not just an intellectual idea or religious words. God's Spirit is within us but we have to find a way to discover His presence and then begin to cooperate or work in harmony with Him. One of the prayers that we should begin to offer frequently is:



Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who are everywhere present and fill all things, Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life: come and dwell within us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls, O Gracious One.

This is our Church's formal prayer that is directed to the Holy Spirit.

In order to discover the Spirit within us, we have to WANT to discover Him. He will not push His way into our lives. We have to invite Him to be a part of our lives. That is why this prayer is so very wonderful. It invites Him to reveal Himself to us and help us to become deeply aware of His presence within us.

So God has given us the potential to grow in our likeness of Jesus, God's Son and His human image, and His Spirit is indwelling within us to help us achieve this goal. Again, however, we have to freely and voluntarily

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OUR MOST IMPORTANT DOCTRINE: THE TRIUNE GOD

In the classical Latin Trinitarian doctrine, “Father, Son and Spirit are only ‘relatively’ distinct.” Whatever the interpretation given to the idea of “relation” implied in this statement, it is clear that Western thought recognized the ontological primacy of essential *unity* over personal diversity in God; that is, that God is essentially one, except in the divine *Persons*, who are defined in terms of *relations*. In Byzantine thought, however - to use an expression from Maximus the Confessor - “God is identically monad and triad, and there is probably a tendency in both worship and philosophical formulations (as distinct from doctrinal statements) to give a certain pre-eminence to the personal diversity over essential unity. A reference to the Nicæan “consubstantial” was the Byzantine response to the accusation of “tritheism.”

This reference, however, could not be decisive in itself, simply because Greek patristic thought, and particularly that of the Cappadocians, always presupposed the starting point of apophatic theology: that God’s being and, consequently, the ultimate meaning of hypostatic relations were understood to be totally above comprehension, definition or argument. The very notion of God being both Unity and Trinity was a *revelation* illustrating this incomprehensibility; for no reality, accessible to the mind, could be both “one” and “three”. As Vladimir Lossky puts it: “the Incomprehensible reveals



Himself in the very fact of His being incomprehensible, for His incomprehensibility is rooted in the fact that God is not only Nature but also Three Persons.

Here we see the true difference between Eastern and Western theology. Western theology feels that it can adequately “define” Who God is. Eastern theology, realizing that God is totally and truly incomprehensible, cannot define God. It is a mystery. Of course, the Western world bought into the Scientific Method and believes that it can come up with a definition for all things. Eastern Christianity merely stands in awe of the Three-In-One.

THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL: NICAEA (325)

So by the fourth century, the Church came to a point in its development where priests and bishops were debating Who Jesus Christ was/is. They did not have the vocabulary to express who they thought that He was/is. Some thought He was more Man than God! Some thought He was more God than Man. They could not truly understand how He could be equally God and Man. This was the challenge.

Further, they were confronted with the need to preserve the idea that there was only ONE GOD. Jewish tradition had established that the idea of a pantheon of gods is not in any way reasonable. The Jewish experience of God was that He was ONE GOD who made a covenant with His creatures, His people. So Christ, being of the Jewish religion, would never have suggested that there were “multiple” gods. God had to be just ONE BEING.

What the early Church was confronted with was, however, that this Jesus did miraculous things and preached about living which was truly more reasonable. Plus, His followers had a firm conviction that He came back from the dead. They had unique experiences of Him after His death.

SO, the big question was: Who was/is Jesus? He acted like He was God Himself and referred to Yahweh, the God of the Jews, as His Father. So Who was/is He?

So the idea of many of the Fathers of the Church was that He was not only



God but also, at the same time, a human and that He came to give us a new way of thinking about our relationship with God and about how to live this earthly life. He suggested that it was not about keeping RULES and COMMANDMENTS but, rather, about how we treat other human beings. He taught, by His very life, that living in accord with God’s Spirit, was what would bring about a true and real relationship with God.

So, confronted with these ideas, the Fathers of the early Church, beginning with Nicaea, attempted to bring about a NEW idea of Who God Is and also Who Jesus was/is. This required the idea that God IS THREE-IN-ONE - that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that the THREE PERSONS are God, consubstantial and in unity.

One has to admit that this idea could not have come about without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. To conceive of God in this manner is truly inspirational. It makes so much sense. It is, however, a mystery.

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
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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
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, June 23 - Second Weekend After Pentecost - Tone 1
10:00 AM - Don Piurko; Liz Reaume 40th Day

SECOND WEEKEND AFTER PENTECOST

Monday, June 24 - Birth of John the Baptizer
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Tuesday, June 25 - Febonia - Venerable Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Wednesday, June 26 - David of Thessalonica, Venerable
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Thursday, June 27 - Sampson, Venerable
No Service Scheduled

Friday, June 28 - Translation of Cyrus & John's Relics, Unmercenaries
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Saturday, June 29 - SS Peter & Paul, Preeminent Apostles
No Service Scheduled

Sunday, June 30 - Third Weekend After Pentecost - Tone 2
10:00 AM - Special Intention

(Continued from page 5 - the Call to holiness)

desire to actualize this potential. It will require, of course, us to make changes in our lives. We must become people who are focused on the development of our spiritual lives. We must become, as it were, spiritual people - people who desire to bear witness to our God during our present lifetime, work to build His Kingdom on earth right now and see that the meaning and purpose of life is to grow in our relationship and true union with God.

This quite often means that we have to disregard some of our society's ideas and preoccupations. It may mean that we have to put aside the desire to have all the new things of this world.



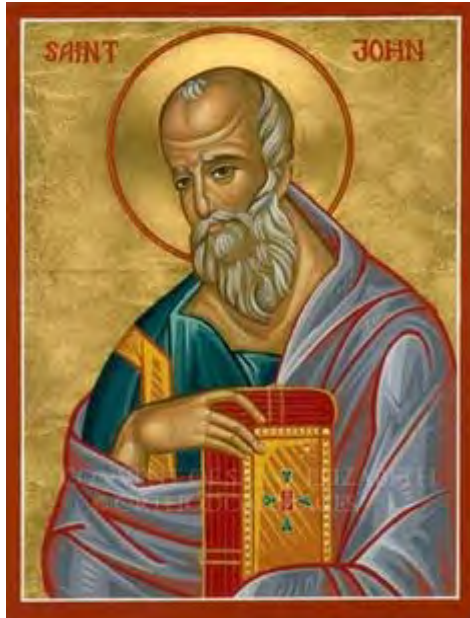
<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org> - and - [Facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn)

MORE ABOUT ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

One of the unique things about John's Gospel is its use of "symbolism". More symbolism is found in John than in the other Gospels. More attention is called to the spiritual significance of apparently routine happenings and to the fuller meaning of words and events. The "beloved disciple," the man born blind, Lazarus, represent at times not only historical personages, but all Christians. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is the Church itself. Such symbolism is extended to other events and persons and makes it necessary for us to read John with close attention lest his full meaning escape us. Similarly, it is surely no accident that the first witness of John the Baptizer is climaxed seven days later in Jesus' own witness to himself, in the first manifestation of his glory at Cana. The new work of creation has begun that was heralded by the deliberate reminiscence of the first creation in the opening line of the Gospel (*the Gospel we read on Easter*). The beginning of John's Gospel is indeed a new Genesis, clearly stating that Jesus

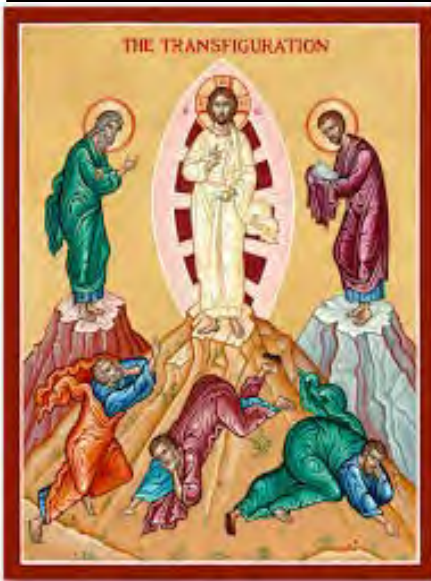
is the Word of God the Father's idea which is brought into existence by the Spirit. This beginning places Jesus, God's Son, at the time of creation.

Such symbolism is an integral part of the Gospel and must be considered in interpreting John's chronology and his juxtaposition of events. Without question, of all the material available to him, the symbolic potentialities of words or events have at times determined the Evangelist's choice of what material he would use; that he made such a choice he tells us in 20:30. However, symbolism for its own sake does not exist in John. The author never challenges the reader's subtlety as an end in itself, but always to make him realize that there was nothing trivial, nothing without moment in the life that is portrayed in the Gospel. Doubtless, too, some commentators have exaggerated the symbolism of John, finding esoteric meanings where the Evangelist intended none and which would have served no purpose.



ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

UNDERSTANDING THEOSIS - DEIFICATION



The Church Fathers of the late second to fourth centuries (Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Athanasius and Gregory of Nazianzus) make *Theosis* a major theme, yet none of them defines the term, or discusses it at sufficient length to clear up ambiguities; they seem to assume that its content is common knowledge in the Christian community.

The first theological definition of *Theosis* was given in the sixth century by Pseudo-Dionysius, but it is general and inexact: "Divinization consists of being as much as possible like and

in union with God." The meaning of *Theosis* varies throughout Patristic theology, sometimes even within the same author. Some scholars project later developments of *Theosis* onto earlier church fathers, underestimating the role of specifically second-century themes. I will be attempting to share what some scholars have written in an attempt to clarify how the theological concerns of the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists situate and share their deification concepts.

I would, before I proceed any further, share some "terminology" of *Theosis*. A great variety of terms are used to communicate the idea of deification. Ben Drewery sums up "the content or attributes of deification" as *teleiosis* (ethical perfection), *apatheia* (exemption from human emotions or passions), *aftharsia* and *athanasia* (exemption from mortal corruption or death). Among the conceptual equivalents for deification are union, participation, partaking, communion/partnership, divine filiation, adoption, recreation, intertwined with the divine, similitude with God, transformation, elevation, transmutation, commingling, assimilation, intermingling, rebirth, regeneration and transfiguration. The preferences of particular authors vary greatly.

Some English language authors make a distinction between divinization (taking on godly qualities) and deification (becoming godlike beings); others do not. Of course all Christian authors make such a distinction *conceptually*, whether or not they make it terminologically. It is a most fascinating topic and one truly worthwhile to explore for the sake of our spiritual growth. Life's Goal: To become more like Jesus for union with God.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

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

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June 22-23, 2019

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

A corollary problem of the idea that Salvation is really UNION with God is that Eastern salvation theology entertains problematic notions of the freedom of the will, a positive anthropology, and, worst of all, the idea of human-divine *synergia* in salvation. It is also a fact that Protestants have insisted that Eastern Christians “idolatrously make us all little gods or that they think of participation in the divine nature only in physical terms.” The great church historian Adolf von Harnack insisted that Irenaeus had adopted Gnostic ideas (a cult which was distinguished by the conviction that matter is evil and that emancipation comes through knowledge) and truly misunderstood these concepts in physical ways. Harnack is but an example of this kind of mindset. It is almost amusing, if it were not so sad, that the United States Library of Congress’ cataloguing system puts the texts of Gregory Palamas, a leading Eastern theologian, after the Gnostic texts of Nag Hammadi and before various Manichaeian texts: the implication being that Palamas’ theology of deification and Jesus-prayer belong in the same category with Far Eastern mysticism and Manicheanism. These kinds of charges are both inaccurate and, of course, false. So little is known really about Eastern spirituality.



THE TRANSFIGURATION

You, my readers, will recall that some time ago I wrote about the Western idea of “justification” and how false that is considered by Eastern Christians. Jesus didn’t die in order to placate our Heavenly Father because of our faults and weaknesses. His death did not justify us before our Heavenly Father! His death destroyed DEATH.

What Have We Left Behind?

Most successful people would probably tell you that what separates great people from ordinary people is that great people are willing to risk making decisions, whether right or wrong, and then acting on those decisions. Great people are people who have made great choices, often very risky choices, but in the long run their choices have usually been right. Biblical history is peopled with folks who were confronted by decisions they had to make.

Just imagine the decision required of those fishermen on the shores of Lake Galilee. Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John were fishermen, true, but they were businessmen. Perhaps even prosperous businessmen. Fish was a staple in the diet, and fishermen could often make a very good living. The brothers Peter and Andrew were

probably business partners with the brothers James and John and most likely had a good business going. So when Jesus said to the two sets of brothers, "Follow me," He was not calling them to leave a sport, or a hobby; he was asking them to leave their careers, their livelihoods, and their families! They had everything to lose.

What have we left behind to follow Him? Unless there's some pain, some discomfort, some sacrifice, then most probably we haven't left anything. Perhaps we're still fumbling about in our boats, tossing our nets over the side, and business goes on as usual.

Yet, if we do that, the Great Fisherman might leave us and move on to someone else, and the choice might go by forever.