

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Synaxis of the Apostles -- June 30th

A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

As we begin this Third Week after Pentecost, we hear readings from Paul's Letter to the Romans and excerpts from Matthew's Gospel. In Paul's Letter, he shares his idea that "affliction makes for endurance, and endurance for tested virtue, and tested virtue for hope." I truly believe that this is a very important interpretation of the message given to us by God through Jesus Christ. Indeed His demonstration of endurance in the most difficult of circumstances, tells us that there is hope. God did not abandon Him. It seems that His ability to endure all the challenges of His life, gained Him special help and support from God. It actually resulted in "resurrection from the dead." This is important for us to hear. If we endure all of the challenges of life with belief in a loving God, we will experience, as Christ did, resurrection from the dead.

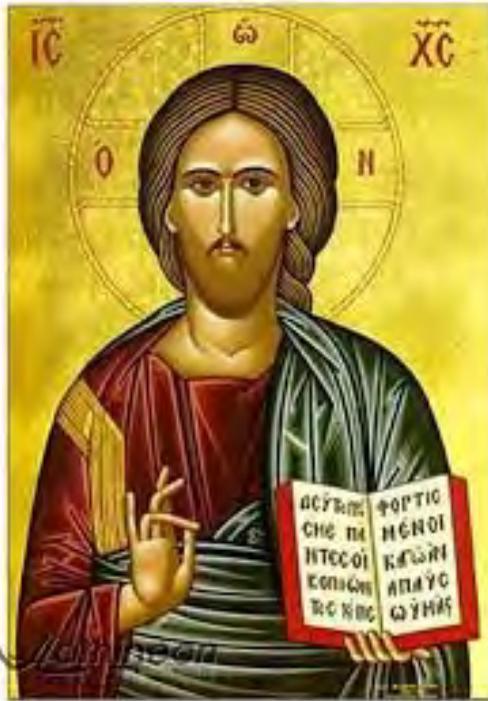
The message from Matthew's Gospel is clear. Matthew quotes Jesus as saying: "no man can serve two masters. He will either hate one and

love the other or be attentive to one and despise the other. You cannot give yourself to God and 'money'."

This is a very important message for us. We cannot want to be part of this world and buy into all the things of this world and expect to be one with Christ. To follow Christ means to be, at

some real level, cross-cultural. When I look at all of the things that are presently a part of our American culture, I realize that as a follower of Jesus I cannot buy into any of the basic trends. The total lack of respect for others that is a part of our national discourse, is truly unchristian.

The problem, as I see it, is that we allow our politics to overshadow our religious values. Our political culture has sabotaged our Christian values. It manipulates us and allows us to "hate" others who do not think like us and "judge others" who do not have our same values. That is not the teaching of Jesus. We truly need to think about what Jesus taught us and to embrace His way of living.



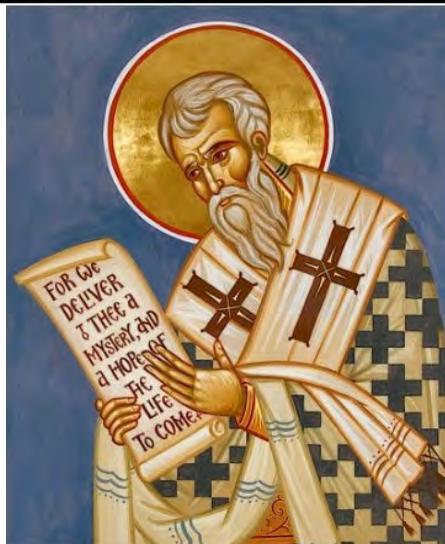
ON THE UNITY OF CHRIST

In this article, I have been drawing on Cyril's treatise of the "Unity of Christ". Within this treatise there is an indication of this aspect: 'since the manner of the economy allows Him to blamelessly choose to suffer in the flesh and not to suffer in the Godhead.' The age old question was, as you might surmise, did Jesus suffer as God?

Cyril conveys' his argument about this topic in another part of his discussion with his friend "Christ is said to suffer in the flesh, even so he retains His impassibility as He is understood as God'. On another occasion Cyril gives a further testimony to the impassible Christ: 'He suffers in His own flesh, and not in the nature of the Godhead'. We do not believe that Christ, as Son of God, suffered. It was Jesus, as a human, who suffered.

With numerous accounts in the main text testifying to the divine nature not suffering within the unity of Christ, such an assertion is also cited by other sources: 'God suffers in so far as His own body suffers, for He does not suffer in His deity, He suffers in His humanity which He appropriated as His own.' In light of this there is further support given for this Christological claim of St Cyril concerning impassibility of the Divinity of Christ: 'the word suffered in His own flesh, but did not suffer in the nature of the Divinity, as He is impassible God.' In light of this we see quite interestingly that according to Gavriyuk there seems to be a striking relevance to this aspect from a Nestorian point of view within a confession of faith.

This is the uniqueness of the HYPOSTATIC UNION that the Fathers conceived. Jesus, Who was both God and Man, suffered only as a man

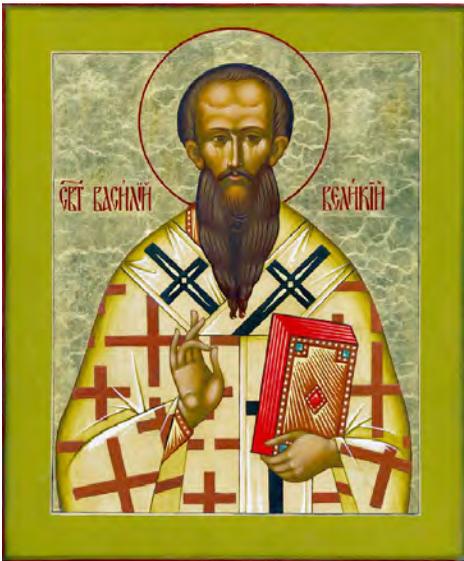


ST CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

since His Godhead did not take over His humanity but, rather, co-existed with it. This is why our dogma about Jesus is so hard to understand. We only know that we, although we have a spiritual and physical nature, only sense the things of our physical nature. We don't see our soul as distinct from our body. Therefore if the body suffers, the soul also suffers.

This is the mystery that we encounter in Christ, according to our religious beliefs. He was fully divine and fully human which means that His divinity could not supplant His humanity and that, like us, He suffered, died and arose.

ST BASIL'S THOUGHTS ON GENESIS



ST BASIL THE GREAT

I ended this article in this Bulletin in the last issue with the fact that God created the sun and the moon for signs and for seasons and for days and years. The preposition FOR identifies three categories (1) the signs, a distinguishing mark, which includes within it two subordinate categories: (2) seasons and (3) days and years. The term *seasons* refers here to the cultic calendar of the feasts of Israel and all ancient peoples, and the term *days and years* also refers to the days of this calendar of all the ancients depended upon such astronomical observations to focus their lives. The sun and

moon therefore allowed men to observe a calendar of religious festal times.

The emphasis here falls upon the sun and the moon rather than the stars. We discern here a tacit rejection of the astrology so prevalent in the ancient Near East. (We even see it enter into the New Testament [NT] with the “kings” or “astrologers” in Luke who came to visit the new born King - Jesus). Myths such as the *Enuma Elish* stressed the importance of the zodiac, but our story completely ignores it. The pagan gods such as Marduk may have stood in the center of the powerful zodiac, but in Israel the stars played little part. (By the way, astrology stills plays a vibrant role in our modern society. How many people follow their horoscope?). They are mentioned in passing, and even the sun and the moon are only mentioned as mere lights, set in the expanse to serve as illumination. They were not therefore gods, but mere lamps, like the simple lamps that give light to the houses of men. Note: they were not gods *to be served*, but merely lights *that served*. The word used to describe them is *me'or*, the same word used to describe the lamps of the Mosaic sanctuary in Exodus 25:6. We discern here a quiet polemic, dethroning the gods and reducing them to mere furniture in the hands of Israel's Lord.

That, of course, was the real intent of Genesis: to dethrone the “old gods” who were worshipped in the rest of the world, with the God of Israel, YAHWEH. He was the ONE TRUE GOD Who called Israel to be His people. He had to be greater than all of the other gods who existed among people at that time.

St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



A CHANGE IN PLANS

There has been a slight delay in Len's subdiaconate ordination due to Bishop Benedict's schedule. We are presently coming up with a few suggested dates.

The Bishop will ordain Len to the diaconate here in Dearborn. It is my hope to combine the Bishop's visit with Len's ordination. I will suggest November 3rd. This way we can have one big celebration. This has yet to be confirmed with Bishop Benedict.



Always believe something wonderful is going to happen. Even with all the ups and downs, never take a day for granted. Smile, cherish the little things and remember to hug the ones you really love.

***You've gotta dance like there's nobody watching,
Love like you'll never be hurt,
Sing like there's nobody listening,***

A CALL TO HOLINESS

The call to holiness is a call to live in accord with God's Spirit within us and in accord with the spirit of the society in which we live. Unfortunately we all want to be a part of our society at some level BUT it is essential that we embrace Christianity instead of our society. I know that many find this hard to do since we live in a society and we desire to be a part of it. But the reality is that our society is NOT CHRISTIAN - it does not embrace the values of Jesus Christ, at least as far as I can see.



So we have a decide whether we want to be "Americans" or "Christians." In years past I don't know if I would have written this. I do know that as I view our modern society, there is definitely a completely disregard of Christian values. There is one thing to "disagree" with someone. This has always been done in a polite manner in the past. There is another thing to call adversaries "names" and "castigate" them publicly. This is totally impolite and against all Christian values. Our national discourse is a disgrace! It does not call us to unconditionally love one another while still having our own opinions. Why should our nation condone public figures openly insulting one another? Are we not more civilized and cultured than that? I believe we seem to have lost out way as a civilized society

(Continued on page 8)

OUR MOST IMPORTANT DOCTRINE: THE TRIUNE GOD

The knowledge of God is therefore possible only inasmuch as He reveals Himself, inasmuch as the immanent Trinity manifests itself in the “economy” of salvation, inasmuch as the transcendent acts on the immanent level. It is in the fundamental oneness of these “acts” or “energies” of God that the Greek Fathers, particularly Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, discover the decisive and existential sign of the unity of God’s essence. Basil’s well-known argument in favor of the divinity of the Spirit is that He has the same “energy” as the Father and the Son. Similarly, Gregory of Nyssa proves the essential unity of Father, Son and Spirit from the unity of their operation. This argument also fits into the context of the Cappadocians’ polemics against Eunomius, who affirmed the possibility of knowing God’s essence; no knowledge concerning God, they asserted, was possible, except from His “energies”. The “economic” Trinity revealed in God’s action in the world is, therefore, the only possible basis for affirming that God is indeed, paradoxically and incomprehensibly, a transcendent and immanent Trinity.

Gregory of Nyssa’s doctrine of the “energies” is described as:

In men, in spite of the solidarity of the whose race, each individual acts separately, so that it is proper to regard them as many. This is not so with God. The Father never acts independently of the Son, nor the Son of the Spirit. Divine action always begins from the Father,



proceeds through the Son and is completed in the Holy Spirit; there is no such thing as a separate individual operation of any Person; the energy invariably passes through the three, though the effect is not three actions but one.

We cannot know how this is possible. It is a mystery. All we can do is believe that the Trinity of Persons Who we call God, always act as ONE. The formula that the Eastern Fathers embraced is that the Father acts through the Son in the Spirit. It is as if the Father has the thought, the Son expresses this thought in a Word and the Spirit makes the expressed word and thought real.

Think about this !

THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL: NICAEA (325)

Many summary accounts present the Arian controversy as a dispute over whether or not Christ was divine, initially provoked by a priest called Arius whose teaching angered his bishop, Alexander of Alexandria. Eventually, this traditional account tells us, the controversy extended throughout the century - even after the decisive statements of the Council of Nicaea - because a conspiracy of Arians against the Nicene tradition represented particularly by Athanasius perpetuated Arius' views. It must be remembered that the Church was attempting to grapple with the idea of *Who Jesus Is*. They knew that He preached a way of living that could bring about salvation but they still - four centuries after Him being on earth - did not understand Who He Is. Even when the century is understood as one of evolution in doctrine, scholars continue to talk as if there were a clear continuity among non-Nicene theologians by deploying such labels as Arians, semi-Arians, and neo-Arians. Such presentations are misleading in two very important ways.

First, this controversy is mistakenly called Arian. No clear party sought to preserve Arius' theology. Many who are termed Arian justly protested their ignorance of his teaching or works; indeed their theologies often have significantly different concerns and preoccupations. Even those who initially supported Arius in his struggle



with Bishop Alexander may be misleadingly termed Arian, if what they recognized in the controversy over Arius was not an attack on their teacher or main inspiration, but an attack on one who expressed ideas to which they (perhaps only in part) subscribed. Many of Arius' earliest supporters appear to have rallied to him because they, like him, opposed Alexander's theology: we have little information about their allegiance to the emphases of Arius' own theology. For these reasons some scholars now simply refrain from using the term Arian other than as an adjective to describe Arius' own theology. The relationships between those termed Arian must be demonstrated, not assumed.

Second, it is misleading to assume that these controversies were about "the divinity of Christ" if that implies either a *a priori* agreement about the meaning of ascribing divinity to the Son, or if it means that these controversies focused on this question.

Schedule of Services

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

THIRD WEEKEND AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 3

Monday, July 1 - Cosmas & Damian, Unmercenary
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Tuesday, July 2 - Deposition of the Robe of Mary
No Service Scheduled

Wednesday, July 3 - Hyacinth, Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Thursday, July 4 - Andrew of Jerusalem, Archbishop
No Service Scheduled

Friday, July 5 - Athanasius of Mount Athos, Venerable
No Service Scheduled

Saturday, July 6 - Sisoies the Great, Venerable
No Service Scheduled

Sunday, July 7 - Fourth Weekend After Pentecost - Tone 3
10:00 AM - Special Intention

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

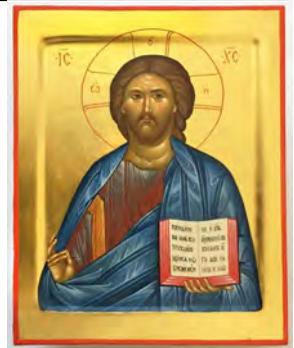
Leonard Mier
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter
313.624.9867

(Continued from page 5 - the Call to holiness)
and when we condone this and support this behavior we violate our basic Christian values.

This is why I believe that the call to holiness is to reject that ways of our modern society and return to the ways of Jesus Christ. How do we truly treat one another, even those we disagree with? We treat them as human beings that have God's Life and Spirit within them whether they are aware of it or not. We don't stoop to "vulgar" and "uncultured" behaviors. We respect people and we respect the fact that they may differ from our opinions. It is important that we, who call ourselves followers of Jesus, refrain from such behaviors and made sure that we promote civility and respect for all others, even those we may disagree with.



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

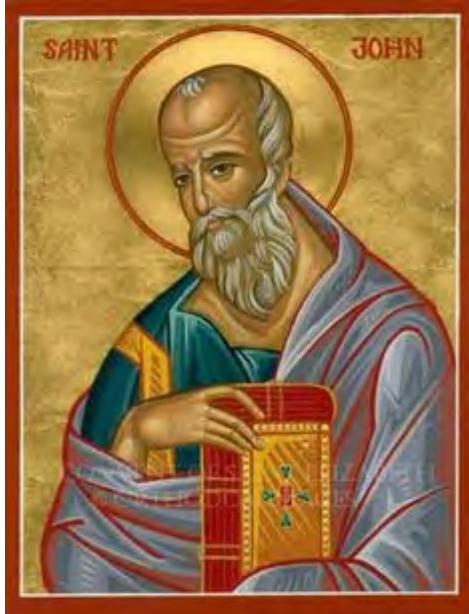
MORE ABOUT ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

What about the fourth Gospel as history? Fully aware of the late dating of John, of its non-apostolic origin, of its influence by Hellenistic thinking, and of its highly theological purpose, the criticism of a past generation took it for granted that there was very little if any authentic history in John, and that in matters of this kind the Synoptics order and presentation were invariably to be preferred.

These reasons hardly permit such a view to be held today. "The sources or traditions used by the fourth evangelist deserve at least as much respect as those employed by the Synoptics. John's truly theological orientation has, it is true, caused him to subordinate the merely statistical aspect of history to the far more important concern of its meaning as known through faith, but for all that, the Gospel is historical. History was of the very religious air that John breathed: if the history were not true, the revelation it contained obviously would have no significance whatever.

Doubtless the Synoptics' presentation is to be preferred because they represent Jesus' Messianic proclamation as gradual, as opposed to the way it is present in John, where from the beginning it is taken for granted. Here we should

have no difficulty in recognizing that John has anticipated real historical development for theological reasons. (The Fathers also recognized the priority of the theological over the merely statistical in the Gospels). In reality, Jesus undoubtedly appeared more often among men as the simple teacher depicted in the Synoptics than as the



ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

profound preacher implied by the Johannine discourses. It served John's highly spiritual purpose to stress this profound aspect of Christ's teaching rather than the other, and correspondingly to center his Gospel in Jerusalem among the doctors of Judaism rather than in the countryside of Galilee. That this aspect of his teaching was historical, however, even the Synoptic tradition itself witnesses.

UNDERSTANDING THEOSIS - DEIFICATION



As you my readers will recall, the beginning of the idea of *Theosis* began with Peter's statement in his second epistle, wherein he said: *you may become participants of the divine nature* (2 Peter 1:4). For a Christian writer around 100 CE to say this was to evoke not only biblical images, but also concepts of divinization that were central to the leading Hellenistic philosophies - Neo-Platonism and Stoicism. Of course, Second Peter's is a Christian teaching, but here he uses terminology that is recognizable from the Greek philosophical traditions, and this should not be overlooked

in studies of Second Peter. One wonders how this could be true. Peter was a fisherman and perhaps had very little schooling. He did have a scribe, Mark. Then again, biblical scholars have called into question the author of Second Peter.

Second Peter has no hesitancy about using Neo-Platonic and Stoic religious concepts and terms to express his biblical monotheism, but what he envisions by "participation in the divine" is far from obvious. It is not clear whether it means the "divinization" of the believer. One should suspend bias, investigate the relevant biblical and non-biblical texts and examine the message of Second Peter itself. (Here I would suggest to my readers that you pick up the New Testament and read Second Peter).

An important connection between Plato and 2 Peter 1:4 is in the latter's reference to "escaping the corruption that is in the world because of lust." The term lust, *epithymia* in Greek, is the same word that Plato uses to describe "appetite" or "desire," the lowest level of a human being. Second Peter seems to share the Platonic instinct that there is a high and noble level associated with correct knowledge, and a lowly level associated with *epithymia*.

The superiority of soul to body is a constant theme in Plato's thought; the body is like a tomb for the soul. He writes, "we ought to try to escape from earth to the dwelling of the gods as quickly as we can; and to escape is to become like God, to become righteous and holy and wise."

It is true that Greek philosophical thought had a great impact especially on Eastern Christianity.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

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

Vol. 65 No 26

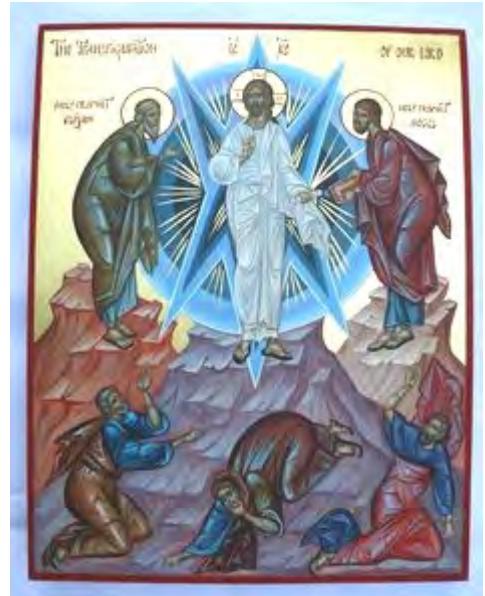
Third Weekend After Pentecost

June 29-30, 2019

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST

Another aspect of our Eastern Christian Spirituality is our thoughts and beliefs with regard to the “constitution” of man. Who and what is he?

According to our faith, man consists of a material body and what we call the soul, which cannot be reduced to matter. The soul permeates the material body and is bound up with it, yet transcends its materiality. The human being demands respect as a being of inestimable value, and it is by reason of the soul that the human being is “someone” and not just “something.” What makes a human being to be “someone” is this substratum endowed with consciousness and with the capacity to react consciously and freely. The human face reveals more than just material differences from one individual to another; it discloses also that spiritual substratum that is distinct from matter. The human being is thereby shown to be someone conscious and unique. This sustains within him both the will to exist and the will to be perfecting himself eternally, which his irreplaceable uniqueness shows itself worthy of enduring eternally. We cannot define this substratum in its essence but can only describe it in its manifestations, knowing about this essential fact, namely, that it is the soul that makes the human being a conscious and voluntary subject,



THE TRANSFIGURATION

unique and irreplaceable.

It is my belief that before we can even begin to truly understand *Theosis* we have to understand who we are in God’s creation and to accept who we are. How we see ourselves in God’s creation makes all the difference. So I will be exploring in the coming issues of the article, thoughts about who we humans are.

Prove Your Faith by Your Trust

'Look at the birds of the air,' says Jesus. What a splendid example for our faith to follow! If God's providence bestows an unfailing supply of food on the birds of the air who neither sow nor reap, we ought to realize that the reason for people's supply running short is human greed. The fruits of the earth were given to feed all without distinction and nobody can claim any particular rights. Instead, we have lost the sense of the communion of goods, rushing to turn these goods into private property. The birds do not know famine because they do not claim anything specially for themselves and neither do they have any envy of others. 'Consider the lilies of the field: not even Solomon in all his glory was

arrayed like one of these. If God so clothes the grass which is alive today and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe one of you!' Listen to these stupendous and uplifting words. With this parable of flowers and grass the Lord urges us to hope that God will also be merciful to us. Nothing is more persuasive than a glance at unthinking creatures who have received such beautiful dress from Providence. Surely we should be all the more ready to believe that human beings, if they entrust themselves completely to God and free themselves of all their worries, will not lack anything.

St. Ambrose of Milan