

SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN



*Icon of Our Lord with the Samaritan Woman*

## A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

As we begin the fourth week of our Easter celebration, our Epistle reading is again taken from the ACTS and our Gospel from the Gospel of John. This interesting combination of readings challenges us to find a uniform message.

The passage we hear from ACTS is about the Church being established at Antioch. Stephen is said to have gone to Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch and, after returning to Jerusalem, Barnabas brings Paul to Antioch to preach. The passage also reminds us that it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians, followers of Jesus.

We must always remember that Jesus did not advocate “starting a new religion”. It was the “reform” of Judaism that was His focus. He set the stage, however, for the creation of a new religion by expanding the message to not only Jews but to Romans and Samaritans or any other human being that crossed His path. Until He came and preached, Judaism was quite closed to any other than Jews and even within Judaism there were various different sects.

The Gospel passage we hear is rather interesting in-so-far-as John uses the story to convey a certain message, namely that the “water of Judaism is replaced by the life-giving water of Christ. The rabbinical comparison of the Torah with water (i.e., as cleansing, as satisfying thirst, and as promoting life) affords the background of John’s teaching. Christ is the fulfillment of what the Law could only promise.

The story is set in Samaria. Official Judaism was very hostile to the Samaritans. They held an interpretation of Judaism that



was not widely accepted by the majority of the main sects of Judaism. John’s interest in the Samaritans was prompted by the adaptability of the Samaritan interpretation of Judaism to the new revelation of Christianity.

Again, both readings stress that the Jesus message, namely the importance of how we treat others, has a great appeal to those whose minds and hearts are not closed to a different approach toward religion. It is important that we don’t get stuck with thinking that our “faith” is the exclusive way to God and that we open our hearts and minds to the true message that Jesus taught. If we attempt to make our faith “exclusive”, we miss the point of our faith.

# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



## HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY

My prayers are for all the Living and Deceased Mothers of St. Michael's Parish.

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## NOTHING NEW

There is really nothing new. Bob Krokosky will be contacting you about a request from the Eparchy. It is his contention and mine that we cannot give out names and addresses unless we first get permission.

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Please know that you remain in my prayers. I ask Almighty God to keep you safe and healthy. zBohom.

## LIVING THE NEW LIFE

Living the "new life", namely a life modeled on the life of Jesus, I have to assess whether I am living in accord with my own real convictions about the meaning and purpose of life or I am following



just what others try to convince me is the true way to live in order to find interior peace and contentment. I have to ask myself: *Am I basing the way I live on the model that God has revealed to me through the Person of Jesus? (of course I have to believe that God revealed how to live through the Person of Jesus).*

I have found that when I ask myself these questions, I have to find an answer that makes sense to me. Another profound question comes to mind: *Why did God, from all eternity, decide to become enfleshed as a human being in the Person of Jesus? What motivated Him to do this?*

[It seems that this week my bulletin is filled with a multitude of questions. I wonder how much Covid19 has to do with this].

Another question just came to mind, what

*(Continued on page 6)*

## BECOMING A HEALING PRESENCE



For this article, I am using a text that was produced by Albert S. Rossi, PhD. I've chosen this because I do believe that we are called, just as Jesus was, to be a "Healing Presence" in our world. This is achieved, of course, by the way we live and treat others. It seems that the early Christians understood this well. I do believe that we are all longing to become something noble, something elevated, and also something beyond our earthbound selves. We have been created to be "gods," enfleshed with Christlikeness, in the full sense of the word, children of the living God.

The abiding question is, "How?" How are we to become disposed to receive such nobility? One way is to take these words of Christ seriously:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself".

To become a healing presence is built on the assumption that the way we interact with our neighbors, both those close to us and those more remote, is the way we interact with Christ, with the Living God.

Christ is everything! Christ is our Physician, our complete healer. He wants us to be His humanity on earth, His healing presence to others. We are a healing presence to others when we give them strength, hope and attempt to heal their life bruises and hurts.

The fundamental truth of the Christian life is a life of love. During our interactions with others we know when we give them strength and hope. We know when we empower them and when we diminish them. All we have to do is observe them as we interact and then watch the way they walk afterward.

Now I truly believe, and this belief is based on how I and the Church interpret the teachings of Jesus, that we are called to be a healing presence to others, always. When we are a healing presence to others, we are, in some sense, a healing presence to Christ Himself, who resides in others. Better said, Christ is the healing presence in us who moves through us to heal others.

Of course in order to become a healing presence to others we have to "desire" to become a healing presence, "feel" that you are capable of being a healing presence and "envision" yourself being a healing presence. This requires, however, that we first have to want to think about others before we think about ourselves. We have to see the "value in" being other-centered as Jesus was.

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## CHRIST'S DESCENT INTO HADES

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As I suggested, I will be attempting to share such texts belong to the general doctrine of the Eastern Church with regards to Christ's Descent into Hades and which texts are personal opinions. The question is: which texts should be considered more authoritative for Eastern Christians and which are less significant.

The New Testament is an unconditional and indisputable doctrinal authority for all Eastern and Western Christians. In Eastern tradition, sacred Scripture is not seen as something primary in relation to church tradition. Indeed Scripture grew out of tradition and composes an inseparable part of it. Scripture is interpreted not spontaneously but from the perspective of tradition. Personal interpretations are allowed only as private opinions. Following St. Paul's statement that the "veil" lying on the Old Testament was removed by Christ, the Old Testament is seen as a herald of the New Testament. Thus the Hebrew Scripture is interpreted through the prism of the New Testament. Both Old and New Testaments are interpreted in the light of tradition, as reflected in the liturgical life and in writings of the fathers and teachers of the church.



Liturgical tradition of the early church should also be granted unconditional and indisputable authority. Liturgical texts are not simply works of eminent theologians and poets but are part of the liturgical experience of many generations of Christians. The authority enjoyed by the liturgical texts in the Eastern Church is based on a process of acceptance that occurred over the course of many centuries. Certain works of church fathers can contain disputable or even incorrect opinions. This cannot be said about the canonical liturgical texts, for church tradition throughout many centuries weeds out any such opinions. Therefore, if we were to create a certain hierarchy of authorities, the liturgical texts would come in second place after scripture.

It must be remembered that in the early Church, before the New Testament was formulated, the stories and ideas which later become a part of the New Testament, were a part of the liturgical worship of the Church. The teaching of the Apostles, which was a part of worship at the "Sacred Meal" that Christians shared, formed the foundation of the New Testament. So we must consider the liturgical texts that we have as part of tradition.

# 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  
248.734.7078

Leo & Mary LaDouceur  
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak  
734.564.9817

Rev Deacon Leonard Mier  
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich  
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter  
313.624.9867

**Sunday, May 10 - Weekend of the Samaritan Woman - Liturgy Streamed  
10:00 AM + Anna Borscht**

## **5th PASCHAL WEEK**

Monday, May 11 - Cyril & Methodius, Apostles to the Slavs  
*No Service Scheduled*

Tuesday, May 12 - Epiphanius & Germanus, Bishops  
*No Service Scheduled*

Wednesday, May 13 - Glyceria, Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Thursday, May 14 - Isidore, Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Friday, May 15 - Pachomius the Great, Venerable  
*No Service Scheduled*

Saturday, May 16 - Theodore, Venerable  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Sunday, May 17 - Weekend of the Man Born Blind  
10:00 AM - Special Intention - Liturgy Streamed**

*(Continued from page 5 - Living The New Life)*

***Does the Jesus way of living give me a "new life"? If I attempt to live the way that He did, will my life really change? Of course then I have to also ask myself: Am I afraid of changing my life or even feel that I have to or can change it?***



Questions, questions, questions. I pose questions to you, my readers, and myself so that I, and then hopefully you, can gain a clearer understanding of earthly life since life is, I think you might agree with me, to say the least, quite confusing at times. I constantly ask myself: *What is life the way that it is?*

Religions, societies and people in general have quite different answers to all of these questions. So where is the truth? The truth, I believe, has to make sense to me and has to inspire me to want to grow and change and truly see human life as the greatest gift God has given to us.

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



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Vol. 67 No 19      Weekend of the Samaritan Woman      May 9-10, 2020

### THE IMPACT OF THE RESURRECTION

What impact does your belief in the Resurrection of Jesus (*if you believe it*) have on your life? Our beliefs do influence how we act and live, even if we aren't totally aware of this. Our beliefs dictate how we approach the challenges of life and how we treat others. So how does your belief in the Resurrection change your life?

I think that it is critical, if religion is to help us live life more effectively, that we think about our beliefs and how they impact us. So, I would ask my readers to stop right now and reflect upon what this very essential belief of our religion means to them. I think it has profound implications. Put simply, for example, what does it mean to you that this belief tells us that humans are immortal? What ramifications does this fact have on how you live right now? What do you envision your future life will be like, especially as you pass from this world to the next?

What does the belief that Jesus conquered DEATH by His own death mean to you? I truly believe that the stories that are foundational to our faith are not just “fantasies” but rather are true “revelations” about this human life that we experience right now.

Of course this all leads to another host of questions that I truly believe we have to ask ourselves. One in particular immediately comes to mind: *If I am immortal and life is eternal, what is the purpose of this present earthly existence?* Do you ever think about this? I believe that if life is to become truly

meaningful, I have to be willing to ask myself these questions and then search for answers that make sense to me. When I do this, then I grow and change. If I never ask myself these important questions, I will never grow and change and then earthly life just becomes a meaningless and useless exercise in futility.



## *A Gift of Mercy*

A story is told about a little boy who was sent to the school principal for misbehaving. After the little boy told him what he had done wrong, the principal took out a piece of paper and wrote the boy's name upon it, as well as the date and the reason for which the boy had been sent to him.

Then, the principal told the boy, "Timmy, I know that you are a good boy and you've never before been sent to me for misbehaving. Therefore, if you are not sent to me again this year for misbehaving, I will tear up this piece of paper and no one will ever know anything about it." The little boy remembered this as the most powerful lesson in mercy that he had ever learned.

The most powerful example of mercy that

we, as Christians, have ever witnessed is our Lord's resurrection, which we still continue to gloriously celebrate. However, earlier this week, on Wednesday, we also celebrated the Feast of Mid-Pentecost. Mid-Pentecost begins to set our sights on the reception of another of God's great gifts of mercy - the Gift of the Holy Spirit, Who will descend upon us on Pentecost Sunday.

Through the Resurrection, we know of God's mercy in that He has given us the gift of eternal life. Through the Descent of the Holy Spirit, we know of God's mercy in that He has not abandoned us. Rather, He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell among us, to dwell within us, and to nourish us, bless us and heal us - especially through the Holy Mysteries.