

SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE
FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL



Η ΑΝΑΛΗΨΙΣ

Θ̅ ΧΡΙΣΤ̅

Icon of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

At the beginning of this seventh week of our Paschal celebration, our readings are taken from ACTS and JOHN'S GOSPEL. This weekend follows immediately upon our celebration of the Lord's Ascension. The reading from John's Gospel relates the "Completion" of Jesus' work. This passage, however, relates something that transpired before Jesus' Death and Resurrection. It is poignant because this passage has Jesus stating: *Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ.* This statement, scholars believe, was added since Jesus would hardly have referred to himself as Jesus Christ. It is important, however, because it truly expresses the faith of the early church.

This passage (John 17:1-13) is beautiful, especially for our reflection. In verse 8 Jesus says: *They have known that in truth I came from you, they have believed it was you who sent me.* These words are meant to be a prayer to the Father. I would encourage you to pick up your bible and read the passage for yourself. It makes for a wonderful meditation.

The passage from ACTS relays Paul's departure for Greece. It is like a parallel to the passage in John's Gospel which relays Jesus' departure. In it Paul writes: *I commend you now to the Lord, and to that gracious words of his which can enlarge you, and give you a share among all who are*



consecrated to Him.

Both readings, connected with our remembrance of the Fathers of the Council of Nicaea, seem to be bidding our Paschal celebration good-bye for another year. So, given this I would pose a question to my readers: *What did this Paschal Celebration mean to you this year?* It was so entirely different, because of Covid19, from all the others we have celebrated together. Not being able to physically celebrate it together, hopefully, made each of us reflect more upon what the whole event of the Lord's Resurrection means to us. I know that I have asked this question before!

St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



AGAIN A BIG THANKS

I would again, on behalf of the entire Parish Family, offer a word of THANKS to all those who continue to generously support the parish during this difficult time. We remain quite solvent thanks to your generosity.

PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED

Sunday May 31st

It is a long standing tradition in our Detroit area to visit cemeteries on Pentecost Sunday and the Sunday of All Saints. While we will not be able to keep this tradition this year, we will be serving a Panahyda (Requiem) Service after the Divine Liturgy on Pentecost for the deceased. If you would like your loved ones mentioned by name on that day, please just either email me the names or snail mail them to me.

PARISH GENERAL MEETING

In the very near future we plan on holding a VIRUTAL GENERAL PARISH MEETING to talk about re-opening the Church for services. The Parish Council recently had a virtual meeting about this topic. We would like to involve as many members as possible. **MORE TO COME**

**LIFE IS LIKE A
TEN-SPEED
BICYCLE... SOME OF
US HAVE GEARS
WE NEVER USE.**

LINUS

NO COMMENTS

LIVING THE NEW LIFE

This article is meant to remind us that Jesus has proposed a "new life" for us, a life that attempts to imitate His life. This life is meant to liberate us from our fears and, in place of those, to give us HOPE. His new life is to reject our natural tendencies and our human instincts, and to adopt a life of CHOOSING to live like He lived. His way of living requires that we reject our natural tendencies to:



- ◆ **JUDGE** others and reject them if they are not like us and don't hold the same values as we do;
- ◆ **DISRESPECT** others and reject them if they don't believe as we do;
- ◆ **REJECT** others and even though they may hate us and see us as enemies;
- ◆ **CONDEMN** others and reject them because they embrace values that we don't accept;
- ◆ **DISPARAGE** others and reject them because they don't see life and religion as we do.

The Christ message, especially when we look at His entire life, was to live in this manner. SO, if we want to imitate Christ, we must look into our own hearts and minds and determine if we judge, disrespect, reject, condemn or disparage any other human being. If we find that we do, then we must work to change our hearts, minds and ideas to reject this way of living. Why? If we want to grow in our "LIKENESS" of Jesus, we have to change this way of thinking and behaving.

The interesting thing is that those who have followed the way of Jesus (Continued on page 6)

THE CHURCH'S UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS CHRIST



At the beginning of this 7th Paschal Week, the Church has us remember the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, perhaps one of the most important Councils of Christianity. It is important because it started the process by which the Church came to Her understanding of Who Jesus Christ is. It started with this Council, Nicaea (325) and ended with the Council of Chalcedon (451).

The Council of Nicaea was convened by the Emperor Constantine to resolve the controversy of Arianism, a doctrine that held that Christ was not divine but was a created being. Chalcedon declared that Christ has two natures in one person and *hypostasis* and insisted on the completeness of his two natures: Godhead and manhood.

It is fitting that we end our Paschal celebration with the beginning of our true understanding of Who Jesus Is. The Council of Chalcedon defined one Christ, perfect God and man, consubstantial with the Father and consubstantial with man, one sole being in two natures, without division of separation and without confusion or change. The union does not suppress the difference in natures;

however, their properties remain untouched and they are joined together one Person, or *hypostasis*. This definition was elaborated from formulas of Cyril of Alexandria, Leo I, John of Antioch, Theodoret of Cyr and Flavian of Constantinople, and in remarkable balance, and it put an end to the Christological uncertainties of the 4th and 5th centuries.

The Council of Nicaea was called because of the heresy of Arian and the Council of Chalcedon was called because of the heresy of Nestorius. The Council Chalcedon represented a culmination in the history of the dogma of the Incarnation.

The Council of Nicaea formulated the Nicene Creed the first dogmatic definition of the Christian Church and has served as a *tessera* of orthodoxy, that is a foundational block of our Christian faith. Its main thrust was to affirm that the Son, Jesus, is the Only-Begotten of the Father and proceeds from the very essence, or nature of the Father.

We read this Creed at every Divine Liturgy and state, before reading it: *Let us truly love one another so that we might profess with faith what the Creed clearly articulates.*

BECOMING A HEALING PRESENCE



One of the essential abilities that we must cultivate if we desire to become a “healing presence” for others, is the ability to become “still”. Interior stillness is critical so that God’s Spirit within us can work through us.

As we try to become still, what do we do? The Fathers suggest that we begin by becoming aware of our breathing. We go gently inside.

As the sixth-century monk St. John Climacus said in *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, in the chapter “A Brief Summary of All the Preceding Steps,” “Let the remembrance of Jesus be present with your every breath. Then indeed you will appreciate the value of stillness.” St. Maximus said simply that God is breath. And Philotheos stated, “We must

always breathe God.”

In our silence we try to become centered. As St. Ignatius recommends in his book *On the Jesus Prayer*, we try to be aware of our “quiet steady breathing.” He goes on to say, “Breathe with care, gently and slowly.”

This all may seem basic, but in today’s culture and probably in our own lives, it isn’t easy. We are all tempted to squash silence one way or another. One Father wrote: *Let us utter the name of Jesus as often as we breathe. For it is light to our darkened mind. The guarding of the mind is rightly and worthily called light-giving, producer of light, source of light, and bearer of fire.*

We should always be turning the name of Jesus Christ around the spaces of our heart as lightning circles around the skies before rain.

What do we breathe? We breathe the name of Jesus. His very Person is mysteriously encapsulated in His name. His name is His Presence. “I will strengthen them in the LORD, and they shall walk up and down in His Name.”

We are told in the Bible, “And whatever you do in word or deed, *do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*” (Colossians 3:17).

We just breathe His name. As another author wrote: “let the Name penetrate our soul - as a drop of oil spreads out and impregnates a cloth. Let nothing of yourself escape. Surrender your whole self and enclose it within the Name.

While I know that this process is difficult at first, just start with small steps. Just try to pay attention to your breathing and reciting the name JESUS for three or four minutes. Once you are able to accomplish this, increase the time in very small increments. You will gradually be able to do it for longer periods of time.

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 24 - Weekend of the Fathers of the First Council
10:00 AM - Special Intention - Liturgy Streamed

7th PASCHAL WEEK

Monday, May 25 - 3rd Finding of St. John the Baptizer's Head - MEMORIAL DAY
8:00 AM - Special Intention - Liturgy streamed

Tuesday, May 26 - Carpus, Apostle
No Service Scheduled

Wednesday, May 27 - Threrapont, Bishop-Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Thursday, May 28 - Nicetas, Bishop
No Service Scheduled

Friday, May 29 - Theodosia, Venerable Martyr
No Service Scheduled

Saturday, May 30 - Isaac, Monk
No Service Scheduled

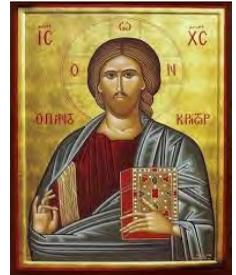
Sunday, May 31 - Weekend of Pentecost
10:00 AM - Irene Durisin; Family; Birthday

(Continued from page 5 - Living The New Life)

have all declared that they have found internal peace and a real and true understanding of life. These people are, of course, those who we call saints.

Now the interesting thing about our religion is that it asserts we are all called to be saints, people who have seen the true message revealed to us through Jesus Christ and have determined to embrace His way of living. His way of living brings about the fullness of life.

In His life, Jesus rejected no one, even though He called to task the Pharisees and others of His religion who preached one thing and lived another. He called them and us to "authentic" living - to living as God intended us to live as humans. The way God intended us to live IS LIFE-GIVING. He didn't call us to live in this manner for any other reason. He knew the Jesus way of living would free us!



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



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНИЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 67 No 21 Weekend of the Fathers of the First Council May 23-24, 2020

THE IMPACT OF THE RESURRECTION

How has our belief in the Resurrection of Christ impacted on your thinking and living? If you challenge yourself, you have to admit that it has opened your life to a different way of living. It opened the lives of thousands before us to a new way of living - even to a way of martyrdom. It meant so very much to the early Christians that they were willing to suffer and die for their belief. Would you be willing to die for your belief in the resurrection of Christ? If not, why not?

Think about it. There were thousands of people who were willing to believe in Jesus Christ because of His resurrection from the dead. Why? Because His resurrection confirmed to them that what He preached about life was true. Even though it meant personal change and rejection of their old ways of living and believing, they felt that He gave them hope and that He helped them to see that life is a wonderful gift and that it is given to us

to help us find the meaning and purpose of life.

Would you be willing to give up your life for belief in Jesus Christ? If not, why not! This is not a judgment! This is a call for authentic and genuine living. Your answer can be that you are afraid of death. That is truly legitimate. It is also true that you have to confess why you truly believe!



I can truly say that I don't want to have to give up my belief in Christ to save my life. I only hope that never comes to pass. But I also know that I would hope that if it came to this, that I would have

the courage to stand up for my belief in Christ because I feel that He truly presented God's revelation about the true meaning and purpose of life.

So, ask yourself the same question that I asked myself: *Would I be willing to give up my life for the sake of my belief in Jesus Christ?* Do not judge your answer, just understand it!

Shining the Light

One Sunday morning, the parish priest talked about being the “light of the world” in his sermon. He explained that a person filled with the light of Christ means that a person is filled with goodness and knowledge and justice and truth. He ended his sermon by asking the congregation, “How do you intend to be a light of the world?” Unexpectedly, a little girl shouted out, “By being a pretty window!” Her parents were embarrassed by her outburst and told her to be quiet.

Afterwards, however, the parish priest asked her what she meant. It turns out that the little girl had been staring at the church’s stained glass windows during the sermon. She said that the sun shining through the windows caused pretty colors to shine on people all through the

church. “If Jesus wants us to let our ‘light shine on others,’ then the best way to do that is by being a pretty window,” she said.

There is much truth in the simplicity of the little girl’s observations. Light is truth and it dispels the darkness of error and deceit. Christ our Lord said that we are to be the lights of that world and that our light must shine on others. (Matthew 5:16) Today, we keep the memory of the Fathers of the First Nicene Council. These enlightened and inspired men were filled with the light of truth and corrected some grave misunderstandings about the humanity and divinity of Christ. The light of the truths they taught in the fourth century still shines upon us today and is contained within the words of the Nicene Creed.