

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*Icon of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)*

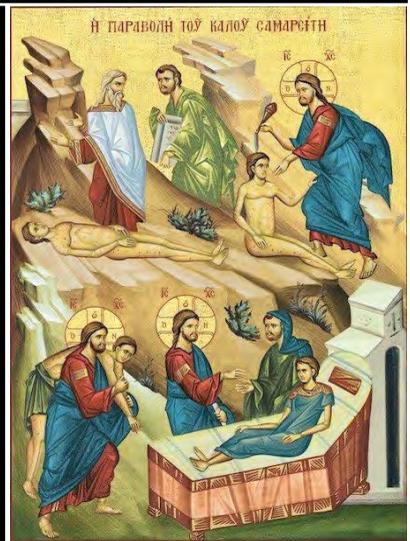
## A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this 24th weekend after Pentecost our readings are taken from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians and Luke's recounting of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The passage from Ephesians continues Paul's thoughts about how all humans, Jews and Gentiles, are "United in Christ." Paul asserts that Jesus, in His own flesh, "abolished the law with its commands and precepts, to create in Himself one new man from us who had been two and to make peace, reconciling both of us to God in one body through His cross, which put that enmity to death."

We have to remember that originally Jewish followers of Jesus maintained that Gentiles had to embrace Judaism and all of its rules and rituals. This is where Paul begins to preach that Jesus did not come to just reform Judaism but, in fact, that His teachings and way of living in effect suggested a "new religion".

The parable of the Good Samaritan is, perhaps, one of the best known parables of Jesus. It suggests, I believe, two particular things which are supported by the fact that the parable states that both a "priest" and a "Levite", clergy of Judaism, passed by the robbed Jewish man without even attempting to help him. It was a Samaritan, an outsider, who came to the aid of the robbed man.

We must understand that Samaritans in actuality, are a unique people whose history can be traced to Biblical times. They are not considered ethnically Jewish or Arabic, despite the fact that they have lived in close proximity to both groups for thousands of years. Samaritanism is internally described as the religion that began with Moses, unchanged over the millennia that have since passed. Samaritans believe Judaism and the Jewish Torah have been corrupted by time and no longer serve the duties God mandated on Mount Sinai. The parable suggests that Judaism



became a religion which only stressed rules, rituals and commandments.

The parable directly teaches that the way we treat others, regardless of who they are, is the only way that we become "right with God" - that we truly become God's People. The parable also teaches that religious people are those who are not self-centered but, rather, other-centered.

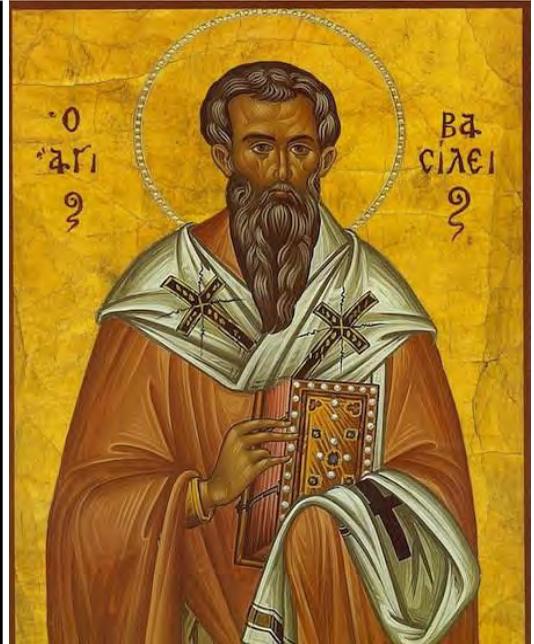
The parable also highlights the true value of "compassion" which is the true sympathetic consciousness of another's distress together with a desire to alleviate it." Jesus, by the way He lived, was a compassionate man

## THOUGHTS ON GENESIS

Surveying the entire sweep of Scripture, as century succeeded century and the New Testament built upon the Old, we see the same themes reemerging and being put to ever richer use. In particular, the *adam* (the noun soon being used as a proper name) appeared as the first person on a genealogical list in Chronicles 1:1 and again later in St Luke's genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:23ff, for which Luke used the material of 1 Chronicles. (We must remember that most early Christians, Jewish converts, were steeped in the Old Testament).

Questions about historicity did not concern either the Chronicler or St. Luke, neither of whom had cause to question the Genesis story's historical accuracy. But strict historicity was never their primary purpose in writing, and we should not be disturbed at the thought that later writers did not recognize the mythological nature of the first stories. The Chronicler and St. Luke were not misled but simply led, for the author of Genesis was primarily concerned not to record history but to offer lessons about human nature and society - lessons the Chronicler and St. Luke learned very well.

Each of the biblical authors who wrote about Adam had his own particular purpose, theme, and theological agenda, and the figure of Adam served each one in a particular way. The original truth presented in the opening stories of Genesis thus became richer and more polyvalent as the centuries of scriptural reflection on it wore on. The tale of the



*adam* in the garden aged like a fine wine.

In the Genesis story, the *adam* first appears as an archetype. In the tale's first telling *adam* is a noun rather than a name, and in his creation from the dust, his discovery of the *ishah* as a true part of himself, and his transgression and expulsion from the garden temple of God, we see a mirror of our own human nature, condition and all. The first tale of the *adam* tells us we are made of dust and live only by the breath and gift of God, and therefore should not rebel against His commands. It tells us that a wife is not mere chattel to her husband, something to be bought and traded like an animal (or divorced).

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES

## **Question: Is genuflecting a part of the Eastern Catholic tradition**

No, it is not. The word *genuflect* comes from two Latin words: *genu*, which means “knee,” and *flectere*, which means “to bend”. In the East, believers are urged to make a *metany* or bow. This flows, of course, from “court practice”. In the West, emperors and kings were shown honor by people “genuflecting” before them. In the East the *metany* or bow was customary. This presents the fact that Christians believed that God was like an emperor or king in His Kingdom.

In the East there are different grades or degrees of *metanies* (plural for *metany*) and are used instead of genuflections. For example it used to be the custom in the Latin Church to genuflect on the left knee before the bishop or pope and then to kiss his ring. It was also customary to genuflect before entering a pew after entering a church in reverence to the Eucharist which resides on the “altar”. In the Eastern Church one cups one's hands together and bows before a bishop or priest and asks, “Bless, Master (bishop) or Bless Father (priest). Then one kisses the right hand of the bishop (or priest). When priests greet each other, they traditionally kiss each other's hand.

We have to consider, as I referenced above, the thinking of the early Church, especially after 325 CE when Jesus was seen as God, a supreme being, who is also incarnate as a human person. Further, when the Church began referencing God's KINGDOM on earth, the Church adopted many of the court customs in reference to a “ruler”.

In most situations today, people do not always approach a priest or bishop and ask for a blessing. This has become more of an Orthodox Church custom in this country. This is partially due to the American idea of independence and individualism. Many of our bishops have also signaled that they do not want people to kiss their hand or ring.



So why do we bow when we come into an Eastern Catholic church? To show reverence to God and to think of ourselves as coming into His presence in a special way. Our icons remind us that a church exists in two worlds, the physical world and the spiritual world. It is hoped that we sense that the church building is a special place which is meant to transport us to the spiritual world.

As you can tell, the cultures where the church grew up greatly influenced practices which have been integrated.

# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



## VIRTUAL ADULT DISCUSSION SESSIONS SCHEDULED

Four sessions are scheduled. Each will take place at 8:00 PM. They are:

**Thursday, December 3rd**

**Thursday, December 10th**

**Thursday, December 17th**

Register today if you want to take part in these sessions. Go to:

**[stmichaelarchangel.org](http://stmichaelarchangel.org)**

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## MARIAN FEAST

**Saturday, November 21st**

This coming Saturday our Church celebrates one of the 12 Major Feasts in our calendar, namely recounting the event when Mary, only three years old, was brought to the Temple to live in service of the Lord. This fulfilled a promise that her parents, SS Joachim and Anna, made to God if they were released from childlessness. Mary lived in the Temple until she was a mature maiden and betrothed to St. Joseph. This story is a part of the Church's tradition and only related in several writings.



*Make the day special by your prayers.*

## LIVING THE NEW LIFE

Even after all of these weeks writing about "living the new life," I have finally come to realize that many may not think of changing the way that they live, therefore embracing a new life. It is my belief that if we believe that Jesus is our God incarnate and revealed a "new way of living," then we have to embrace the idea that "personal change" or "personal transformation" is an absolute necessity. If we truly believe in Jesus as a model for how humans should and can live, we have to make changes in our lives. Why? Because personal change brings about growth if it is based on the teachings of Jesus. We humans, because we have free will, can make life changes which are also a detriment to spiritual growth.

Again, it is based on our vision of what this earthly life is all about. This life has great value if it is directed toward spiritual growth. It may have little value if we don't see it in this way.

There are many persons in our society who do not believe that this earthly life, as God conceived it, has anything

*(Continued on page 8)*



# HOW TO PERSONALLY EXPERIENCE THE DIVINE LITURGY

To personally experience the Liturgy I have to first ask myself: *What does the Liturgy mean to me?* Do I attend the Liturgy out of “obligation,” fearful that if I don’t I put myself in jeopardy of incurring God’s wrath? Do I think of the Liturgy as a TV program wherein I watch a ritualized reenactment of something that the Church has told me Jesus did with His disciples before He died?

What is the true value of the Liturgy for you? What benefit do you derive from attending the Liturgy? Does your attendance at the Liturgy change your life in any way? Does attendance at the Liturgy strengthen your connection with God and others?

So to personally experience the Divine Liturgy you have to be willing to ask yourself such questions. It is of no benefit if you attend the Liturgy because you are afraid not to attend. We must always remember, God gave us “FREE WILL” so that we can make “CHOICES” about how we live and what we do. To go to church because you believe that it is an obligation negates its true value.

So again I would turn to one of the prayers that the Church puts on our lips: *We have seen the true light. We have received the Heavenly Spirit. We have found the true faith and we worship the undivided Trinity, for the Trinity has saved us.* What do these words mean to you? What does it mean that we have “seen the true



light”? Or, “We have received the Heavenly Spirit”?

I thought we receive the Body and Blood of Christ. So why does the Church have us pray that we have received the Heavenly Spirit?

What I am attempting to stress with these comments is that in order to truly experience the Liturgy we have to **THINK ABOUT** what we say and do together. This is why I try to at least glean at least one important thought each time I celebrate the Liturgy. This means allowing myself to open my heart and mind and let the Spirit, Who is within me, inspire me as I pray.

Of course I would remind my readers that this requires that I “**LAY ASIDE ALL EARTHLY CARES**” when I am in the process of celebrating the Liturgy. Often this takes some work. For example, I cannot think about how much time it is taking to celebrate the Liturgy. If the Liturgy was the last thing life allowed me to do, would I want it to be “short” and “sweet”?

## BECOMING AN ADULT CHILD OF THE HEAVENLY FATHER

I have been wandering all over in this article, attempting, for myself, to come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be an “ADULT CHILD” of the Heavenly Father. It has dawned on me in this process to assert this: *If I make God more like me, having the same values, thoughts and attitudes that I have, then I am not an Adult Child.* Children seem to believe that their parents have the same thoughts and desires that they do and are surprised when they discover that they don't.

As I experience life and those around me, I have come to the conclusion that many humans truly try to make God like them. He just has to hate the people they hate and punish the people that they believe should be punished and, of course, reward those that they believe should be rewarded (of course 95 percent of the time they believe that they should be forgiven and then rewarded).

In other words, children make God in their own image instead of realizing that God made them in His image with the power to grow in His likeness. If we think that we can know exactly how God would react in any situation, we

do not have a realistic, adult idea of Who God really is. Our puny human minds attempt to put God in a box of our own creation so that we can, at all times, know exactly how He would and can react. What a joke! Our minds can never comprehend Who God really is and how He would act. We can only discover how He acts.

So being an ADULT CHILD of the Heavenly Father means that we give up our ideas about how we think God acts and just stand in awe at His acts. If God remains a “pet” item under our arm - that is an idea that we have from childhood - we are not being His Adult Children.

We must always remember how we describe Him in our Liturgy. We recognize Him as: “ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, ever-existing yet ever the same”. This says He is a God that we can't even imagine and be accurate. So to think that we can know the mind of God and what He thinks or how He acts, has to be false and incorrect.

Adult Children of God can say this much: I know that He loves me since He created me and keeps me in existence. For this I am thankful.



# Schedule of Services

**Sunday, November 15 - 24th Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 7**  
**10:00 AM + Husband Taras & Parents in Ukraine; Jaroslava Zalopanyj**

## 25th WEEK AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 8

Monday, November 16 - Matthew, Evangelist  
*No Service Scheduled*

Tuesday, November 17 - Gregory, Wonderworker-Bishop  
*No Service Scheduled*

Wednesday, November 18 - Plato & Roman, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

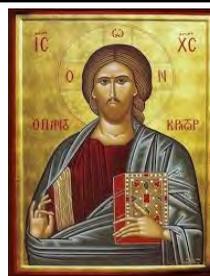
Thursday, November 19 - Obadiah, Prophet  
*No Service Scheduled*

Friday, November 20 - Gregory the Decapolite, Venerable  
*No Service Scheduled*

Saturday, November 21 - Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Sunday, November 22 - 25th Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 8**  
**10:00 AM - Divine Liturgy and Sacrament of Matrimony for**  
**Mykola & Nadia Darmits**

*(Continued from page 5 - Living The New Life)*  
to do with personal change. The philosophy of existentialism is a philosophy that emphasizes individual existence, freedom and choice. It holds that, as there is no God or any other transcendent force, the only way to counter this nothingness (and hence to find meaning in life) is by embracing existence as it is.



Christianity, which believes that there is a personal God, believes that this life is all about personal change so that we might come to see the true meaning of life. As we become more and more aware of the true meaning of life, we find that we can navigate all the twists and turns of life in a much calmer manner. Life challenges don't bring depression, despair and inner turmoil but, rather, inner, hope-filled peace. It all depends on how you want to life: with inner peace or inner turmoil.

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

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Pastor

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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  
248.734.7078

Leo & Mary LaDouceur  
313.278.7378

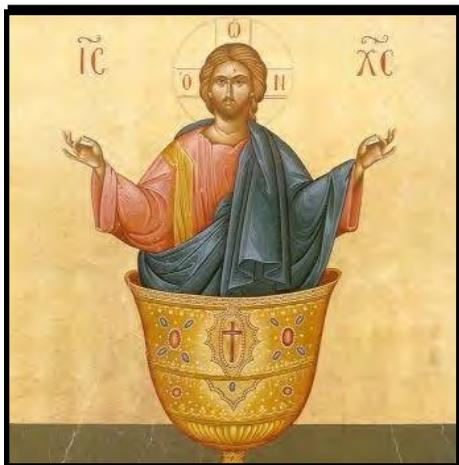
Gordon Malaniak  
734.564.9817

Rev Deacon Leonard Mier  
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich  
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter  
313.624.9867

## BECOMING A HEALING PRESENCE



As I ended the last issue of this article I shared that the present moment can be either an opportunity or a burden. So what can we find to assist us in our quest to enter the present moment more fully? Prayer is the perfect way. Beyond prayer, there are at least three basic ways, all of which have to do with altering our awareness. First, we can be attentive to our breath and our heartbeat. When I am aware of my breathing, I can't be aware of my past or my future. I am simply aware of my breathing. The Desert Fathers had much to say about this. When we focus on our breath and heartbeat, we focus on our inner body, our inner universe, where Christ resides.

Second, we can choose to

to be more aware of the specifics of our current environment. We can notice if the room is warm or chilly. Does the time seem to be moving slowly or quickly? Are there any distant sounds, such as those of birds?

Third, we can become more aware of our bodily sensations, the distinctiveness of this moment's "data" as awareness of our bodies. For example, is the pen I'm holding thin or thick? Can I feel my toes move in my shoes? Do my facial muscles feel relaxed or taut? One practical thing to do is be more aware of one's fingertips; I can run my fingertips across the cloth in front of me, being aware of its texture.

One implication of these insights is what is called in the secular culture "living in the power of the now". We can begin with each new and fresh breath. Each breath has been preplanned by God to be part of the larger mosaic of our life. No breath is wasted or negligible. We treasure each new breath until our last. We treasure each breath with the awareness that our breath - that is, life - is given to us to become a healing presence for others and ourselves.

The present breath is the portal to the present moment, the power of the now. And that is the only place where God is. This can be a conversation stopper or starter, even in non-Christian circles. But the secular culture does not have a monopoly on insights into the value of the present moment. The Church Fathers and the wise theologians explain the present moment eloquently.

I would encourage my readers to at least attempt to experience the present moment by using these suggestions. Remember, the present moment is the only place where God is.

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN TODAY?

What is the “heart” of Christianity? What is most central to Christianity and to being Christian?

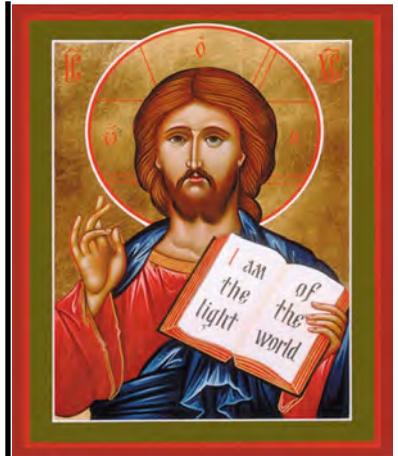
The question arises in each new period of Christian history. It is especially important in our time. A new way of seeing Christianity and what it means to be Christian is emerging in the church in North America. Because this vision of Christianity is quite different from the dominant way of seeing Christianity over the past few hundred years, our time is also a time of conflict. In our context of change and conflict, what is Christianity’s “heart”?

Like all good metaphors, *heart* has more than one nuance of meaning. To begin with, it suggests what is most central. What is the core of Christianity the “heart of the matter”? What is the essence of Christianity and the Christian life?

If “core” and “essence” suggest something too abstract, too lifeless, *heart* is also an organic metaphor, suggesting something alive, pulsating, the source of life. What is the heart, the animating source or driving force, of Christianity without which it would cease to live?

Furthermore, as in the phrase “head and heart”, *heart* suggests something deeper than the intellect and the world of ideas. What is it about Christianity that is deeper than any particular set of Christian ideas and beliefs? and what is it about Christianity that reaches us at our “heart” level - at a level of ourselves deeper than the intellect? The heart, this deeper level of the self, is the “place” of transformation. What is it about Christianity that gives it power to transform people at the “heart” level?

Christians in North America today are deeply divided about the heart of Christianity. We live in a time of major conflict in the church. Millions of other Christians continue to embrace an earlier vision of Christianity, often insistently defending it as



“traditional” Christianity and as the only legitimate way of being Christian.

The familiar labels of “conservative” and “liberal” do not work very well, because both are imprecise. “Conservative” covers a spectrum ranging from Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson to C.S. Lewis to Karl Barth. The latter two would find the first two to be strange bedfellows.

The label “Liberal” can be applied to a range of Christians from those with a strong sense of the reality of God and a deep commitment to the Christian tradition to those who reject tradition. So these labels don’t tell us very much.



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, STL, Ph.D.  
Vol. 67 No 45 24th Weekend After Pentecost November 14-15, 2020

### SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND INNER HEALING

Union with Jesus is the first goal of the Christian life. This is the primary way in which a Christian experiences spiritual growth, for it is in Christ that we have been given every spiritual blessing, and it is through Christ that we have been adopted as God's own children (Ephesians 1:3-5). While God has given to us all that is important, we can make use of His gifts only to the extent to which we are one with Christ, for all of these gifts are given to us "in Him." When we live in Him, we can learn to see, appreciate, understand and use the gifts God gives to us completely and thus we are free to grow spiritually.

Why is this true? It is true because God, in the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus, became incarnate as a human being. By this action He is the true model of what human beings were created to be. Although the incarnation took place in time so that we humans could understand, in God

this was always real. One of the important qualities of God is His "unchangeableness." So all things were forever in Him even though they took place in time with regard for humans. I know, this is a mystery and truly beyond our human comprehension.

Therefore, faithful Christians spend much time and energy trying to come close to Christ. We read the Scriptures, we pray alone and in groups, we study, we try to conform our lives to His Gospel, we yield to His Spirit's gifts. When we do all

these things simultaneously depending on His grace and love, we are living good Christian lives.

Why, then, do many faithful Christians not find the total freedom and joy that the Gospel promises to one who follows its way? This is the 64 million dollar question that I will try to share in the coming issues of this article. I can assure you that it is not because of God's lack of effort!



### *Do We See Jesus?*

If you wish to honor the Eucharistic Victim, offer your own soul for which the Victim was immolated. Make your own soul all of gold. If your soul remains viler than lead or clay, what good does it do to have a golden chalice? Do you wish to honor the Body of Christ? Then do not disdain Him when you see Him in rags.

After having honored Him in church with silken vestments, do not leave Him to die of cold outside for lack of clothing. For it is the same Jesus Who says, "This is my Body" and Who says "I was hungry but you would not feed me. Whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me."

The Body of Christ in the Eucharist demands pure souls, not costly garments. But in the poor He demands all our care. Let us act wisely; let us honor Christ as He Himself wishes to be honored; the most acceptable honor to one whom we would honor is the honor which He desired, not that we ourselves imagine.

Peter thought he was honoring his Master by not letting the Lord wash his feet; and yet it was just the opposite. Give Him the honor which He Himself has asked for, by giving your money to the poor. Once again, what God wants is not golden chalices, but golden souls.

*Saint John Chrysostom*