

THOMAS SUNDAY



*Icon of Saint Thomas and the Lord*

## A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this first weekend after the Great Day, Easter, we celebrate what is known by two names: the Anti-Pasch and the weekend of St. Thomas. It should be further noted that during these 50 days of celebration of Easter, Sundays become the first day of the week. During the rest of the year Sundays are the last day of the week.

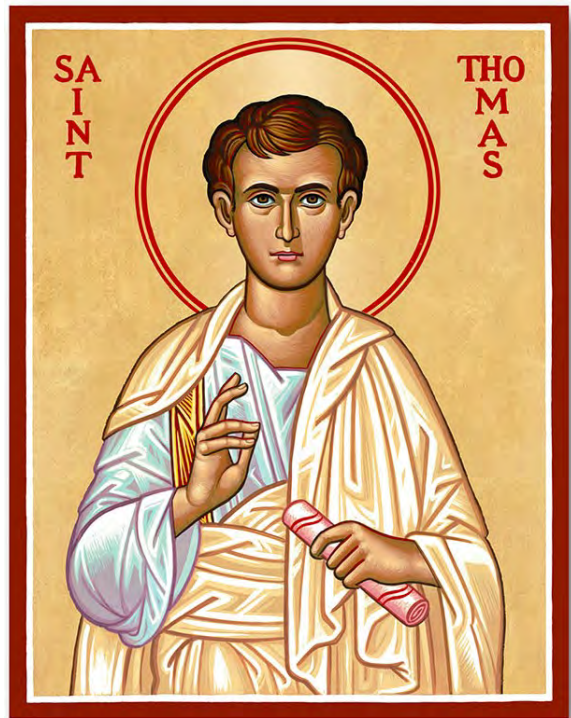
Are readings are taken from the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES (we read from this book produced by St. Luke during the time from Easter to Pentecost. It recounts the early history of the Church of Christ). Our Gospel is taken from St. John's Gospel.

Luke recounts in Acts that through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders occurred among the people. It seems that the miracles of Jesus continued through His apostles.

Something also continued, namely the persecution of the followers of Jesus. The Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Jewish Rabbis, continued to have the apostles arrested and jailed. They were, as Luke states, jealous of what the apostles were able to do.

Of course John's Gospel relates the first appearances of Jesus to His apostles. The story we hear this weekend challenges any "doubts" we might have about Jesus' resurrection. It also gives us a beautiful, simple prayer which we can say always: **My Lord and My God.**

So the message seems quite clear. Don't doubt in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and do all in your power to bring



the love of God, expressed so very eloquently by Jesus, by the way you treat others.

Love of others is what Jesus preached and demonstrated. His true apostles also demonstrated and taught unconditional love of all others, even those who dislike you or want to cause you harm. If you keep centered on living in this way, YOU BENEFIT! You become more and more like a true child (*hopefully Adult Child*) of God.

We always have to remember that "actions" speak more to others than all the "words" we can articulate. Doing, speaks louder than sermons. With the hope of eternal life, we should be motivated in live like Jesus.

# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

While many have suggested that I should not share things about my life in a public manner, I have always thought that is better that people hear directly from me, especially about my health condition.

On Easter Sunday afternoon, I fell and, as I discovered on Tuesday, cracked two ribs. I did not go directly to the hospital and waited all day Monday, thinking the pain would go away. By Tuesday I could not stand the pain any longer and asked to be taken to the Emergency at St. Joes. By the end of Tuesday they admitted me to the hospital and began a whole series of tests. I was not discharged until Friday afternoon. I now have an implanted device which allows my cardiologist to continuously monitor my heart and I also have a device which can call 911 if my heart becomes a problem.

I'm taking this weekend off just to recuperate from the whole experience of being in the hospital and to hopefully deal with the pain that accompanies cracked ribs.

I share this openly because I know that if I don't, the stories that develop are so crazy that I want the people whom I serve to have the truth. You are all in my prayers.

## LIVING A NEW LIFE

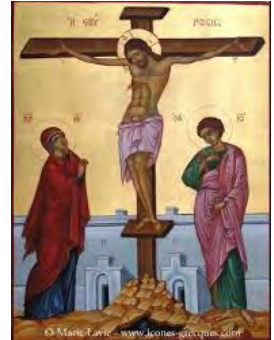
Having gone through the Great and Holy Week, wherein we again more closely observed the true behavior of Jesus, the Christ, we have to again consider how we can imitate Him.

To live a new life, we must have a model that we can follow. Our model, of course, is Jesus. We are created in His image. Why? Because God, in His great love for us, knew that we should have a model that we could imitate if we were to benefit from our experience of this earthly life.

The way that we were created is that the meaning and purpose of live is to "grow" and "change", to become, gradually, all that we can possibly be - to grow into the person that God dreamed us to be from all eternity.

There is something wonderful to think that God would create us in the image of Jesus, come into the world as human Jesus, to show us how to live. We have to be shown how to live because God also gave us "free will" and so we can miss the mark and not fulfill the meaning of this life. I'm always impressed that Good took the chance

*(Continued on page 6)*



## THE BEATITUDES INTERPRETED: GREGORY OF NYSSA

All during the Great Fast this year, as we celebrated the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great and used, as one of our Antiphons, the Beatitudes, I have been considering sharing thoughts about them. I recently came across a book that presented the interpretations of Gregory, one of our great Eastern Fathers, on these very Beatitudes. I truly believe that these very Beatitudes, supposedly preached by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount - His first basic teaching (Matthew 5:3-12). There are 10 Beatitudes that Matthew lists. I find this very interesting since the Jews had the 10 Commandments.

The first Beatitude, I find, is one of the most interesting, encouraging and yet puzzling statements.

“How blessed are the poor in spirit: the reign of God is theirs”.

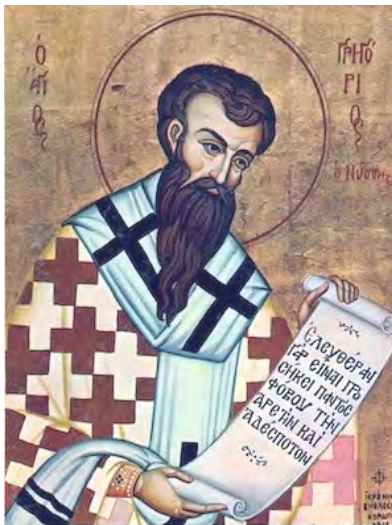
These words of Christ have a more mystical character than any of the others. Moreover, they seem to contradict what the Lord told Moses: “You cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live”. Even in the Gospel of John we find: “No one has seen God” except through the Son.

How then is this passage to be interpreted? One may understand this verse as being solely eschatological,

(relating to death, judgment, and the final destiny of the soul and of humans), seeing it as pertaining only to the future kingdom of Christ. Such an understanding is certainly correct, but also incomplete. Many of the Fathers saw the verse as having a two-fold meaning: the first truly is eschatological; the second, however, refers to the present.

If it is possible to “see” God in the present, how do we reconcile this idea to those passages in Scripture that seem to contradict such an experience? Several passages refer to “seeing” God in the future kingdom. For example, we find in St.

John’s first epistle: “Beloved, we are God’s children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Later he writes, “No man has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us”. In St Paul’s first epistle to Timothy, God is described as the “Lord of lords, who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see”. I truly believe that the Beatitudes are the 10 rules to live by.



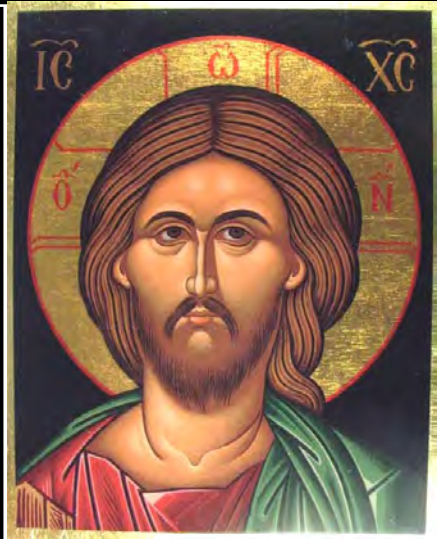
## AN IMPORTANT QUESTION: WHO IS JESUS?

We Eastern Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah of the Jews and that he God of Israel came to be with His people and redeem the human race. He is the one who can and has saved the world from sin and its effects. I know that this is may seem truly comprehensible - that our incomprehensible God as revealed Himself to humankind by taking on human flesh. This means that He, in the Person of His pre-eternal Son, begotten before all ages and consubstantial with Him and the Holy Spirit, came into the world as a human being.

The Church has declared that Jesus Christ was/is truly and fully God and truly and fully a man. This, of course is a mystery. For centuries the followers of Jesus argued about who He is/was. It is our belief that He had to be fully human if He is God's revelation to us with regard to how we should live in order to gain true redemption.

In the past some priest and bishops made Jesus either more God than man or man than God. Neither position, according to the Church's belief, is correct. The problem is that our human minds can't comprehend this type of mystery even though we believe that all things are possible or God except evil. God is total and complete "goodness". Therefore He can do nothing that is evil.

God knew from all eternity that the only way that humans could understand how to live was by coming and being one of them. The Father and the Spirit could not come. The Son could! And so God has brought about our salvation - which I truly think means understanding the meaning and purpose of life. Through Jesus, God has revealed: who we are; how we should live; and our relationship with God and others. This is the knowledge we need in order to grow into the persons that God intended when He



conceived us. (We must remember that we and all others and all things have been in the mind of God from all eternity. Why? Because the present moment is the only moment for God.

Jesus, therefore, is God's personal revelation to us about how we should live if we want to benefit the most out of this earthly life. He also revealed through Jesus that human life is eternal and immortal. Why? Because it is a sharing in God's own life-force. We are joined to God and God is joined to us. Our life is not our own, even though we have individual personalities and characteristics. We are all alive in God.

# 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 Drobný  
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

**Easter Sunday, April 11 - St Thomas Weekend**  
**10:00 AM - Divine Liturgy**

## THOMAS WEEK

Monday, April 12 - Basil, Bishop  
*No Service Scheduled*

Tuesday, April 13 - Artemon, Priest-Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Wednesday, April 14 - Martin, Pope  
*No Service Scheduled*

Thursday, April 15 - Aristarchus & Others, Apostles  
*No Service Scheduled*

Friday, April 16 - Agape, Irtrene & Chionia, Martyrs  
*No Service Scheduled*

Saturday, April 17 - Simeon of Persia, Venerable-Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Sunday, April 18 - Weekend of the Myrrh-Bearers  
10:00 AM - Divine Liturgy

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to create us with “free will.” But of course He had to because we are created in the image of the Logos, Who is Christ Jesus. God did not want to create robots, servants or slaves. He wanted to create creatures who He could truly call His children. Given our “free will”, He knew that we may not always choose the right things to do for our own benefit. SO, from all eternity He decided to some Himself in the Person of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, His Son, to help us understand how to live this life and benefit from the experiences that are presented in this life. If this fact doesn't prove to you that God created us out of LOVE, then nothing ever will. He gives us free will, which means we can make our own choices, even though they may not be beneficial for us. All He does is attempt to love us, hoping that His love will help us to imitate the one human being Who can show us how to live, namely Jesus, the Christ.



<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, STL, Ph.D.  
Vol. 68 No 15 Anti-Pasch/St. Thomas Weekend April 10-11, 2021

### VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

I just admit that at times this article may have seemed confusing. There are various aspects to spiritual growth. For example, we humans have to deal with a multitude of different “feelings.” We have to deal with our feelings in order to spiritually grow.

Many people find the world of feelings to be a dark and truly discouraging world within them, a world of unknowns, a world in which they feel like a child who is lost and wandering, and therefore a world they would rather avoid. Others, while they are more-or-less comfortable with feelings in general, find certain feelings almost impossible to express or even acknowledge. Surely, accepting one’s feelings is something many modern people need to learn to do.

I truly believe our feelings often get in the way of us unconditionally loving and forgiving others. Further, I think that too many people believe and

think that others can make them “feel the way they do.” This is wrong. We are the masters of our own feelings, or should and can be. For example, I respond to someone’s perhaps rude remarks to be with anger. That is a learned behavior - a behavior probably learned in childhood. It may even come from us as children observing adults react to the behaviors of others. If we just give into these “automatic” feelings without any thought, we prohibit ourselves becoming more like Jesus. When



you think about His life, He was in control of His feelings and did not allow how others treated Him to dictate His feeling response. He owned His own feelings. We can too. Of course it takes some work and the deep belief that our feelings are our own and that no other person can make us feel the way that we do. This approach helps us to truly spiritually grow and become more like Jesus.

### *Incorruptible but Touchable*

The Lord's body that made its entrance to the disciples through closed doors was the same as that which issued before the eyes of people from the Virgin's closed womb at His birth.

Is it surprising that He who was now going to live forever made His entrance through closed doors after His resurrection, who on His coming in order to die made His appearance from the unopened womb of a virgin?

But because the faith of those who beheld it wavered concerning the body they could see, He showed them at once His hands and His side, offering them the body that He brought in through the closed doors to touch.

By this action He revealed two wonderful and, according to human reason, quite contradictory things. He showed them that after His resurrection His body was both incorruptible and yet could be touched ... .

By showing us that it is incorruptible, He would urge us on toward our reward, and by offering it as touchable He would dispose us toward faith.

He manifested Himself as both incorruptible and touchable to show us that His body after His resurrection was of the same nature as ours but of a different sort of glory.

*St. Gregory the Great*