

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of the Call of the Apostles

A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this second weekend of after the feast of Pentecost (Saturdays and Sundays now become the last days of the week), our readings are taken from Paul's Letter to the Romans and St. Matthew's Gospel. We begin this new cycle known as "Ordinary Time".

In the passage from Paul's Letter, he emphasizes that humans will be judged by the "interior law", that is the law that has been planted within each of us. We become our own judges relative to how we have followed the Gospel's Good News.

Now Paul writes about God's "Just Judgment". This judgement, which is self-imposed, marks where we will begin "life after earthly death." Since we are engaged in an "eternal" process of growing in our relationship with God, each "new" lifetime has to have a starting point. We, ourselves, begin that new starting point. Again I would emphasize that we are involved in an eternal "process" of spiritual growth, in an eternal process of growing in our likeness of Jesus, the Christ.

Our Gospel passage relates the call of the first disciples or apostles (it should be noted that several different versions are included in the Gospels). What is important to note, however, is that in every version there is a direct relationship to Jesus - Jesus calls the persons to follow Him. I would suggest that that is equally true in our present existence. Each of us is personally called by Jesus to follow Him. Of course



it means that we have to be able to "hear His call."

I suspect that most people wait until they feel overwhelmed before they listen to "His call" to follow Him. He doesn't send it just in times of crises but, rather, constantly. The time to respond to His call is when we are feeling good and want to make a free choice about our life. Do you really want to change? Do you want to become all that God intended you to be? When you can ask yourself these questions is the time to listen to His call.

I would encourage my readers to not wait until you are desperate and feel; overwhelmed by life. Respond to His call when you are enjoying life - it will only enhance your experience of life. When you are desperate, too many feelings get in the way.

Think about it this way. Do you want to benefit the most out of life? If you do, respond to God's call to you through Jesus in the Holy Spirit. You will not be sorry!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN TODAY?

To be a Christian today I have to choose the “type of faith” that I feel best matches my spiritual development. There is yet another type of faith, Faith as “FIDELITAS”.

As with *assensus*, the meaning of the Latin term is suggested by its closest English equivalent: faith as “fidelity.” This is faith as “faithfulness.” Faith is faithfulness to our relationship with God. It means what faithfulness does in a committed human relationship: we are faithful (or not) to our spouses or partners. Faith as fidelity means loyalty, allegiance, the commitment of the self at its deepest level, the commitment of the “heart.”

Faith as *fidelitas* does not mean faithfulness to *statements* about God, whether biblical, credal or doctrinal. Rather, it means faithfulness to the God to whom the Bible and creed are doctrines point. *Fidelitas* refers to a radical centering in God.

It answers the question: *Am I truly faithful to the God in Whom I say I believe?* Its opposite is not doubt or disbelief. Rather, as a human relationship, its opposite is infidelity, being unfaithful to our relationship with God. To use a striking biblical metaphor, the opposite of this meaning of faith



is *adultery*. When the Bible speaks about adultery, most often it is not speaking about human sexual relationships. Sometimes it is, as in the Ten Commandments and in some other passages. But when the prophets indict Israel as adulterous or Jesus speaks of “an evil and adulterous generation,” they are not saying that there is a lot of spouse swapping going on. Rather, they are referring to unfaithfulness to God and god’s covenant.

Another vivid biblical term for infidelity to God is *idolatry*. Though the command to avoid idolatry includes not worshiping graven images, its central meaning is giving one’s ultimate loyalty or allegiance to something other than God. Idolatry is centering in something finite rather than the sacred, who is infinite and beyond all images. As the opposite idolatry, faith means being loyal to God and not to the many would-be gods that present themselves to us. Christian faith means loyalty to Jesus as lord, and not to the seductive would-be lords of our lives, whether the nation, or affluence, or achievement, or family or desire. Think about this!

ST BASIL THE GREAT AND THOUGHTS ON GENESIS

The genealogy in Genesis portrays an individual known as “Man” as the first man and his wife “Life” as the first woman. He is offered as the first figure in a genealogy of ten generations as constituting the first men of the human race. That there are ten generations may point to a certain stylization, for we read in Berossus, a Greek writer writing a history of Babylon in the third century BC, that there were ten generations before the Flood and Genesis lists ten generations after the Flood from Noah’s sons to Abraham. It looks therefore as if the listing of ten generations was an ancient literary device more than actual history.

What then are we to make of the listing of *adam* as the first person in this genealogical list? The author of 1-2 Chronicles, writing after the Exile, seems to have regarded him as an individual no different from the others on the list, such as Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared and Noah, and his lead would be followed by later writers, such as St. Luke, who uses the Old Testament genealogies as the basis for his own. (Though even here, St. Luke’s point was not the historicity of an

individual Adam but the universality of Jesus. St. Matthew traced Jesus’ ancestors back to Abraham to emphasize that He was the Messiah of Israel; St. Luke traced His ancestry back to Adam to emphasize that He was the Savior of all men).

How are we to regard Adam?

Granted that he along with his wife presented as an archetype, must we regard him also as a single historical individual?

It seems that the Book of Genesis combines mythology and history, for the serpent in the garden and the tree of life are clearly mythological, while the stories of Abraham, Pharaoh, and the Patriarchs clearly purport to be

historical. The flow of the Genesis narrative begins with mythology, symbol and transmuted legend and then seamlessly slides into history. This is not surprising, for when the author wished to record the prehistorical realities of how the world began and how it took its present lamentable shape, what else could he do but use the prehistorical? In other words, mythology and symbol were the only teaching tools available.



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



CHOOSING TO LIVE A NEW LIFE

It is my hope that you, my readers, are beginning to see Christianity in a new light. It seems that anytime humans encounter new ways of thinking, they tend to judge these new ways and do everything possible to stop these new ways becoming established. Only those “new ways” that truly have substantial intellectual strength to them seem to survive. I believe that Christianity is one of the new ways that has survived, albeit not without a whole lot of struggle.



that can lead to the fullness of life. Christianity indeed challenges most societal values. It seeks to promote “equality” among people (*we are all children of God*) and even suggests

Persecuted from the very beginning, Christianity has had to struggle to maintain itself as a viable “way of life”

that in order to have a true relationship with God we must develop the ability to have true and genuine relationships with our fellow human beings (*whom we can see and actually interact with*). I believe one of the common heresies of our modern world is that we can have a relationship with God but actually hate and loth our neighbor (*I do believe that our modern “social theory” suggests this.*)

(Continued on page 8)

CONTINUING ADULT DISCUSSION SESSIONS

I would like to get a sense of how many persons would like us to continue the Adult Discussion Sessions that we conducted during the Great Fast this year.

Relative to the sessions

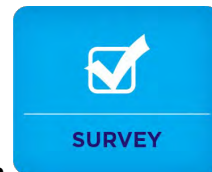
- How often should they be scheduled?
- What’s a good length for a session?
- Is ZOOM a good format?

Relative to session content

- Are there topics you would like to be discussed?

- How we do anything to better facilitate interaction and better discussion?

The premise upon which these sessions was started was to challenge participants to **THINK ABOUT THEY BELIEVE**. They were not intended to be **CLASSES, PER SE**, telling people what they have to believe in order to be a Greek-Catholic in good standing. Do you like this format?



THE DIVINE LITURGY, THE EUCHARIST AND HOLY COMMUNION



I thought that I would start a series of articles on the our primary worship ritual. I think there are so many things that need to be understood. For example when Paul writes to the Corinthians about “when you assemble as a church, these words refer not to a temple but to a nature and purpose of the gathering. The very word “church” means “a gathering’ or “an assembly” and “to assemble as a church” meant, in the minds of the early Christians, to constitute a gathering whose purpose is to reveal and to realize the Church.

This gathering is eucharistic - its end and fulfilment lies in its being the setting wherein the “Lord’s supper” is accomplished, wherein the eucharistic “breaking of bread’ takes place. In the same epistle St. Paul reproaches the Corinthians for partaking of the meal other than the lord’s supper in their gathering, or assembling for a purpose other than the eucharistic breaking of bread. Thus, from the very beginning we can see an obvious, undoubted

trinity of the *assembly*, the *eucharist* and the *Church*, to which the whole early tradition of the Church, following St. Paul, unanimously testifies. The fundamental task of liturgical theology consists therefore in uncovering the meaning and essence of this unity.

This task is all the more urgent in that, while this triunity was self-evident to the early church, it has ceased to be self-evident to the consciousness of contemporary Christianity. What we customarily call “school” theology - which arose after the break with patristic tradition and chiefly from a western understanding of both the method and the very nature of theology - generally ignores the bond between the assembly, the eucharist and the Church. The eucharist is regarded and defined as one of the sacraments, but not as the “sacrament of the assembly” - as it was defined by the fifth-century author of the *Areopagitica*. It would be no exaggeration to say that this “scholastic” dogmatics is imply unaware of the ecclesiological meaning of the eucharist and at the same time it has forgotten the eucharistic dimension of ecclesiology i.e., to doctrine of he Church.

Hopefully I will also define a number of different terms. More will be shared about this divorce between theology and the eucharist and its tragic consequences for church consciousness. *More to come!*

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SPIRITUALITY

Having established a relationship with your mentor, what kind of spiritual rule do you set up? The purpose of a rule is to be an aid to training, establishing certain times for certain activities so you can perform them in a focused, obedient and efficient manner. A good rule will cover things such as when you will pray and where, how closely will you keep the fasting rules of the Church, especially if you are new at it or have a medical problem? How will you prepare to receive Holy Communion, and how often will you communicate? All of these things you work out with your spiritual father or mother, and in obedience to the direction received, develop it into a framework within which you follow Christ each day.

At this point you will probably hear from some free spirit, "Aha, we knew it all along; you are oppressed by a religion of rules and you are not free." Nonsense. Discipline and obedience have nothing to do with oppression; they have everything to do with taking godly life seriously. A person who obeys traffic laws is not free to drive in any manner he wants, regardless of who else is on the road; but he is not being

oppressed, he is being kept safe. Nothing gets done in life unless we discipline ourselves to do it. If we are in school, we must study regularly; if we work, we need to show up on time. That is part of the rule by which we get through life in this world. Why would life in the Kingdom be any different?

If we care enough about God to take up our relationship with Him seriously, we will plan our work, then work our plan. "For which of you intending to guild a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to *finish* it - lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to

mock him saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish." We are building a life with God; this means we don't trust spiritual growth to chance and hope for the best, but give it our best effort.

A good spiritual rule will be invaluable, especially if it is rooted in sound spiritual tradition and practice, because that keeps us from wasting time trying to invent new and exotic ways to follow God. Think about it. If you were to develop a plan, what would you put into it?



Schedule of Services

Sunday, June 6 - 2nd Weekend after Pentecost

10:00 AM + Stansylawa Krowicky; Christine Sowinski

3rd WEEKEND AFTER PENTECOST

Monday, June 7 - Theodotus, Bishop-Martyr

No Service Scheduled

Tuesday, June 8 - Translation of Great-Martyr Theodore's Relics

No Service Scheduled

Wednesday, June 9 - Cyril of Alexandria, Archbishop

No Service Scheduled

Thursday, June 10 - Timothy, Bishop-Martyr

No Service Scheduled

Friday, June 11 - Bartholomew & Barnabas, Apostles

No Service Scheduled

Saturday, June 12 - Onuphrius & Peter, Venerable

No Service Scheduled

Sunday, June 13- 3rd Weekend after Pentecost

10:00 AM + Divine Liturgy

(Continued from page 5 - Choosing to Live a New Life)

It seems that much of modern Christianity espouses a stance that says we can choose the persons we accept and love, typically because they embrace the same type of Christianity that we do, and reject all the others. What a skewed and false understanding of Christianity!

Although challenging, true Christianity states, I truly and deeply believe, that we accept, love and respect all other human beings regardless of what they believe, how they live, or who they are. I say this with true belief that, as I reflect upon Jesus, I see that is exactly how He lived. He embraced all others, regardless of who they were. He had no need to reject any others.

SO, have you placed any "conditions" on those you are willing to accept and love? If so, on what basis? Is there anyone you refuse to accept? Why? What makes you the arbitrator of what is "RIGHT"?



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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 Wawter
313.624.9867

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

THE BEATITUDES INTERPRETED: GREGORY OF NYSSA

In the last issue of this article I ended by suggesting that as people we will become cynical and callous. Indeed Christ warned us that such a coldness will overcome most people. "Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold". These are words of St. Matthew. He looked at human beings and understood that as we look at our society and see that so many don't seem to have any respect for life, that we begin to judge and to have feelings about those people.

While it is true that we don't accept the "ways" that seem to exist in our society, it doesn't mean that we begin to "Hate" those people who don't accept the values that we do. This, of course, is the real challenge of the Christian way of life. To maintain our values about life and God in a world that doesn't see or accept either as real values.

This is a real challenge since the challenge is that we don't hate such people, reject such people, or judge such people. So how do we love people who are bigoted or prejudiced? We are still called, through the message - the Good News - of Jesus, to love them and accept them and do all in your power to bring them to a

deeper understanding of life.

I might add, as an aside, is not this the challenge of Christianity? To show people how we live and call them to a better way of living?

In the past Christianity attempted to "FORCE" people to accept a new way of living. It happened throughout modern history (*look at the attempts of Christianization of America itself*) and it failed. You really can't "FORCE"



people to live a life of acceptance and love of others. With all the Crusades and other Religious Wars we have proven that this is not the way. We cannot force others to embrace a way of thinking. We are all governed by a multitude of "unconscious" thoughts and feelings that truly influence how we live and approach life. Would t hat

we could. That doesn't seem possible when we reflect upon history.

So we have to forge our own way in history to embrace those things that we believe make our life richer. It seems that God, through Jesus Christ, tells us that "relationships" with other human beings can grow our ability to understand life and to live it in such a way that we grow in interior peace. And of course, that is essential in life. Interior peace is the goal here on earth so that it may also be in Heaven.

THE DOCTRINES OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY



Closely connected with the question of authorship is that of the nature of the epistle and its unity. There are those who cannot accept 1 Peter as a genuine correspondence. Some regard it as a Roman baptismal liturgy given in two parts: the first 1:3-4, 11, for those who were being baptized, and the second 4:12-5:11 addressed to the congregation as a whole. To others, 1 Peter represents the structure of the Easter Vigil service, when baptism was performed in the early Church (*you will recall that we still sing "All you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" at this service - the most profound hymn of the baptismal service*).

Suggestions such as these, attractive as they may be, have been subjected to penetrating criticism. The theme of baptism is surely present in the epistle, yet numerous references to baptism do not necessarily lead to the conclusion that this early Christian writing consists of a baptismal liturgy. This view about the nature of 1 Peter assumes that a very elaborate baptismal service existed at such an early date in a fixed form. Other critics, while rejecting the theory that 1 Peter was a baptismal liturgy, accepted this letter as being composed in two parts. The first, 1:3-4-11, was sent to churches that were not actually persecuted, according to their view, whereas the second, 4:12-5:14, was address to those churches that were suffering from persecution. All these theories divide the epistle and question its unity.

It is crucial for the unity of 1 Peter to know whether the persecution is presented as potential in the first part and actual in the second, whether or not Asian Christians were persecuted in the time of Peter or soon after his death. We do not know about an official persecution of Christians in Asia Minor before Domitian (CE 96). What kind of persecution, then, is referred to in 1 Peter? Was the imperial government involved? (*You will gain a sense of this if you read 1 Peter*). If it was, then it would be difficult to understand the exhortation of the author in 2:13-17D: "Honor the emperor." We must suppose that the epistle does not point to the imperial government as the source and initiator of the persecution, but to the hostility and suffering inflicted by pagan neighbors, who represented the majority.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, STL, Ph.D.
Vol. 68 No 23 2nd Weekend After Pentecost June 5-6, 2021

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH



When we are able to be honest with Jesus, however, we place in His hands the feeling that needs His touch, and He has then been freed by a decision of our own wills to be able to heal us. This, I think is an important point. He will not cure us of our hurt feelings without our consent. Our interactions with God is always a two-way interaction. So we have to be sure that we know what we want and that we also know that what we want will be for our benefit and salvation.

This, I know, is more difficult that one might think. The problem usually is that we want

what we want and don't think about how it fits into our personal salvation.

One might ask: *How can I know what will be beneficial for my salvation?* It will be beneficial for our salvation if it opens our hearts to love all others unconditionally and expresses our desire to be in deeper and more genuine communication with others and God.

We continue to come in contact with this feeling at a psychological level by asking ourselves in the presence of Jesus if there are any events that are examples of times when this feeling came on us with particular intensity. We take enough time at this point to allow those memories to come forth. Again, we want to allow the Holy Spirit complete control over releasing memories from our unconscious minds into our conscious minds, for when He is in control, neither will an appropriate situation for healing by missed nor will we unearth something too powerful to handle. We trust Him to do the most loving thing that can be done for us at this moment and to remain with us to the conclusion of the prayer to assist us in dealing with that for which we need healing.

Have you tried bringing a particular difficult feeling into your prayer and asking God to help you cure it? If not, why not?

The Apostles' Call and Ours

But note both their faith and their obedience. For though they were in the midst of their work (and you know how time consuming a chore fishing is), when they heard His command they did not delay or procrastinate. They did not say, "Let us return home, and talk things over with our family." Instead, "they left everything behind and followed," even as Elisha did when he followed Elijah. For Christ seeks this kind of obedience from us, such that we delay not even for a moment, though something absolutely most necessary should vehemently press in on us.

St. John Chrysostom

The kingdom of heaven has no price tag on it. It is worth as much as you have. For Zacchaeus it was worth half of what he owned, because the other half that he had unjustly pock-

eted he promised to restore four-fold. For Peter and Andrew it was worth the nets and vessel they had left behind; for the widow it was worth two copper coins; for another it was worth a cup of cold water. So, as we said, the kingdom of heaven is worth as much as you have.

St. Gregory the Great

Like Peter, Andrew, James and John, we have been called to discipleship. As such, we are given the name of "Christian." But are we conscious what that name stands for, what responsibility comes with it? It is more than just a title or a label. To be a disciple of Christ, to bear the name of Christian, compels us to take on the responsibility – regardless of the difficulty and cost – of living the Gospel every moment of our lives.