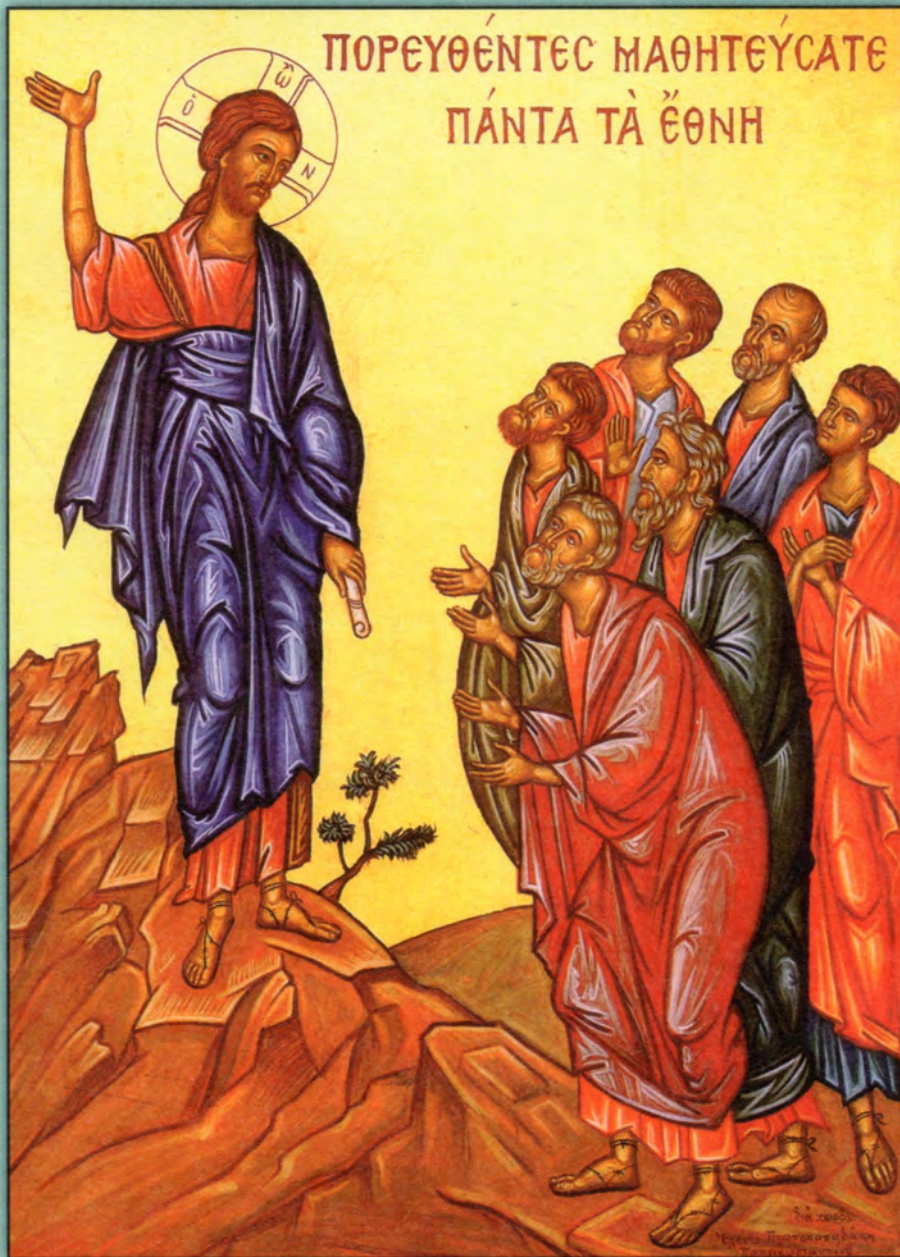


THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



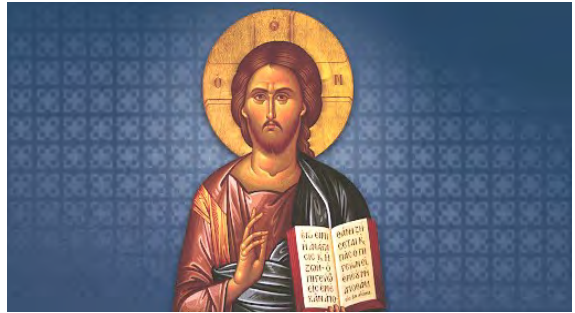
*Icon of Christ Teaching on the Mount*

## A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this third weekend after Pentecost, our readings are taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans and Matthew's Gospel. The principal theme of Paul's Letter is the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, a topic which Paul judged to be much in the minds of the Roman Christians. Each of these religious faiths claimed to be the way of salvation which established a covenant between God and man and made man the beneficiary of divine gifts. Paul points out at the beginning of chapter 5 that belief in Jesus brings true salvation because it brings with it peace with God.

He then summarizes, in some sense, *theosis*. He states that followers of Jesus boast of their afflictions knowing that "affliction makes for endurance and endurance for tested virtue and tested virtue for hope." He sees hope as essential and states: "this hope will not leave us disappointed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Spirit Who has been given to us." Paul's description is straight-forward and right on target.

The passage that we hear from Matthew's Gospel speaks about "TRUE RICHES." Matthew tells us quite directly tells us to store up "heavenly treasure which neither moths nor rust corrode nor thieves break in and steal." He then also makes this profound statement: **"Remember, where your treasure is, there your heart is also."**



So each of us must ask ourself this important question: "Where is my treasure?"

I think that our society suggests that our treasure must be our family, our friends, our reputation, our status in society and all the things that we have. I get no real indication from our society that people, in general, even know what it means to have a heavenly treasure. It could means: Do we as human beings cherish God more than anything else? Do we desire to express our love for Him by the way we live?

The way that we show Him our love is by the way we: love all that He loves, care for all that He cares for, cherish all that He cherishes and hold sacred all that He holds sacred?

What does God love, care for, cherish and hold sacred? First, I truly believe, those beings He created in His image with to potential to grow in His likeness. Second, all other created things since they reflect Him.

If He puts us at the top of His list, do we, in turn, put Him at the top of our list? We are called to love, cherish and holy sacred Him before everything else.



## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN TODAY?

In the Hebrew Bible, faith as fidelity is the meaning of the first of the Ten Commandments: “You shall have no other gods before me.” In the New Testament, it is the meaning of the Great Commandment: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your life force, and with all your mind and with all your strength.” It is followed immediately by a second “like it”: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” *Fidelitas* means loving God and loving your neighbor and being faithful, above all, to those two great relationships.

I sincerely believe, as I think about this, that one of the problems modern humans face is “love of self.” We have yet to truly get it right. Love of self is not pride, even though it could become the foundation of pride. I love myself because God loves me and has made me His TEMPLE. Much more could be said about this. Ask yourself this question: “Do I truly love myself?” To love oneself doesn’t mean that I think I am perfect. Far from it. It does mean that I see my value and worth in God’s creation. If I can’t see this, I suspect that others cannot also.

And how are we faithful to God”? Though challenging, faith’s ways are also simple. It means



paying attention to our relationship with God - just as faithfulness in a human relationship means not only “not straying,” but being attentive to the relationship. We are attentive through the simple means of worship, prayer, practice and a life of compassion and justice. To be faithful to God means not only to love God, but to love that which God loves - namely, the neighbor and indeed the whole of creation. Faith as *fidelitas* thus includes an ethical imperative (*What is an ethical imperative? An ethical imperative is a belief or principle which is perceived as extremely morally necessary. This intensely-felt moral code motivates a person to act accordingly.*)

Thus, it can be concluded that love of God and love of neighbor are intrinsically bound together. Our neighbor, and that means any person who crosses our path in life, allows us to “see” and “encounter” God because we recognize His Spirit within them.

This is the real challenge of faith - to find God in our neighbors who may treat us badly and disregard us. How we respond to them increases/decreases of spiritual growth.

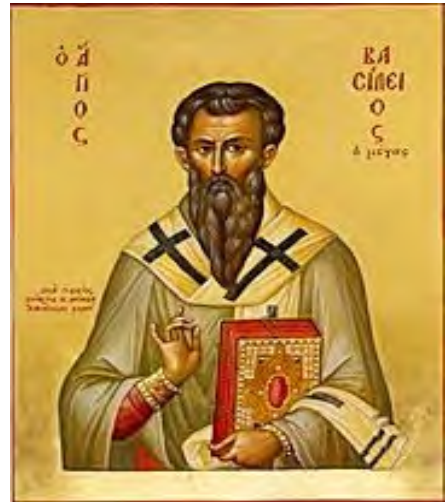
## ST BASIL THE GREAT AND THOUGHTS ON GENESIS

It has been suggested that mythology and symbol were the only teaching tools available to the author of Genesis to describe something as large and overwhelming as world origins. He didn't have "scientific" data to draw upon and he could only fantasize why life is the way that it is. Genesis, by the way, contains several different versions of creation.

As G.K. Chesterton once said, "strictly speaking we know nothing about prehistoric man, for the simple reason that he was prehistoric. The history of prehistoric as is a very obvious contradiction in terms." But what cannot be described historically can still be described mythologically and with the artistry of symbol and legend. Indeed, only by using a canvas as large as myth, symbol and legend can one paint a story as fast and universal as the author of Genesis wished to paint for us.

Therefore the author used the language of myth in describing how the God of Israel made the world as His temple and mankind as His priests. He used the language of myth to describe the creation of man and woman (i.e., the foundation of the human race) and how sin against our Creator caused and continues to cause us to forfeit our access to immortal life. He chose a story of fratricide to introduce all human history, thus characterizing history as a continual fratricide (i.e., since all humans belong to the same species, they are related. So when we kill once another, we commit fratricide).

The author of Genesis took a number of prominent ancient figures, combined them with his original creation stories of the *adam* and his children to make up the traditional ten generations, and presented this as the beginning of history. The result is not a falsification of



fact but a work of art. The earliest names of history (such as Kenan, Mahalalel and Jared) fit seamlessly with the story of the first *adam*. The dual use of the word *adam*, which can function both as a common noun meaning "mankind" and also as a proper name, itself points the way and suggests how history and myth may fruitfully conjoin. The mythological element of the *adam* is necessary because the author relates the tale of our creation, a truth too big to be stuffed into the small suitcase of history. This historical element of names such as Kenan and the others is necessary because the author is describing the state of the actual world we live in.

# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



## CHOOSING TO LIVE A NEW LIFE



I have been pondering where I want to go with this article. As I have shared before, it seems at times to be just a stream of consciousness. But I also believe in serendipity. I just read something else which has refocused my thoughts on

this topic of “Choosing To Live A New Life.” I truly believe learning how to “live a new life” is the primary task of this earthly existence. The big question is: *How do I do it?*

Thus the serendipitous entrance into my life of a small book to open one's heart: a spiritual path by author Michel Evdokimov. I shall use it as a basis for my further thoughts. Hopefully it will be of benefit to any who “choose” to read this. I truly believe that in order to choose to live a new life I must open my heart.

Opening one's heart - why? It is done for a simple reason: to become enriched by the presence of the other before me - to go and meet him or be delighted by a work of art or the beauty of the world, or lastly, to let myself be filled with God's beauty. (Just look around you at the creation in which we live. There are clouds in the air of all different shapes and sizes which are wondrous. Life is coming back into existence after winter. There are all kinds of people who represent the diversity of God's

*(Continued on page 8)*

## SUMMERTIME

Summertime has always been a difficult time when it comes to church attendance. Quite often church attendance is the last thing we think about. I suspect that this post-COVID 19 period is going to be even more feelings about “getting away”. I would just ask that you consider that we are here, maintaining a schedule which includes worship. I would only ask you to answer the question posed by today's Gospel readings: *Where your treasure is, there your heart is also.*



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## GROUP DISCUSSION



I would ask anyone who is interested in continuing our adult discussion groups to let me know (email: [wruhgy@gmail.com](mailto:wruhgy@gmail.com)) since we are attempting to plan next steps. Would like to have a few sessions during the coming summer months - at least 3 sessions.

## THE DIVINE LITURGY, THE EUCHARIST AND HOLY COMMUNION



I thought that before I got too deeply into this article, I would first share several definitions of words which are essential to understanding the substance of this article. The first is, of course EUCHARIST.

This term, Eucharist, is derived from the Greek word **εὐχαριστία** (*eucharistia*): thankfulness, gratitude, giving of thanks, words of gratefulness. As a noun, it refers to the acts of thanksgiving, expression of thanks, and words of gratefulness. In more general terms, Interestingly, this term, not found in the gospels, makes reference to the secular appreciation of others, giving thanks and praise to God, prayerful vigilance, and extending prayers (and petitions) to others.

The related verb *eucharisteo*, meaning to give thanks, refers to Jesus' offering up bread and wine. This verb, rather than the related noun, more closely corresponds to the Jewish ritual blessing of bread and wine. Jesus' offering of the bread and wine points to the Eucharist.

The word **Eucharist** in Eastern liturgical theology has taken on the meaning of being thankful to God for the "gift of life" and involves the expression of thankfulness in the way that Jesus did.

How did Jesus ritually express His thankfulness to the Father for the gift of life? He found a way to offer His very life back to the Father in thanksgiving. This way allowed Him to be with His disciples for all time and to provide His followers with a means to do the very same thing that He did, namely to offer their lives to the Father in genuine thanksgiving.

The way that Jesus found to accomplish His goal was by taking articles of food, bread and wine, and declaring them as truly His very essence. "Food" represents life in a true and genuine way. All Jesus had to do was to declare some particular food, in this case bread and wine, as representative of Him and then declaring it to be His very essence.

The most important aspect of this action is that Jesus gave us a way of joining Him in offering ourselves back to the Father. Food sustains humans. Therefore "food" is the greatest of all symbols that could have been chosen to represent human life.

Therefore, food offered as a symbol of life, to the Father in thanksgiving for life, becomes the ultimate worship for humans. We offer ourselves, not animals or substitutes to God.



## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SPIRITUALITY

St. John Cassian, in writing about establishing a spiritual rule for ourselves, wrote about the dangers both of seeking novelty and of working on our own. "We will most easily come to a precise knowledge of true discernment if we follow the paths of our elders," he writes, "if we do nothing novel, and if we do not presume to decide anything on the basis of our own private judgment. Instead let us in all things travel the road laid down for us by the tradition of our elders and by the goodness of their lives.

Of course we still need to be discerning. A rule should be flexible, precisely because we are putting up a framework, not a prison. There is the danger that we will become obsessive about our discipline, forgetting that it is a tool rather than an end in itself. That is why we are under direction and should never try to work it out by ourselves. We might need to make adjustments; lives and schedules change, so that what was a good time and place to pray might no longer be so. Our physical condition may change, so that the amount of fasting might have to be adjusted. Or wonder of wonders, we might grow spiritually

stronger, in which case we could do even more.

There is nothing wrong with changing our rule to reflect changes in circumstances, as long as we do so in consultation with our trainer. Two heads are better than one, and we

should never attempt to make decisions about where we are spiritually by ourselves. The danger is that we become obsessed about keeping our rule, no matter what; that we won't see the need for change, won't listen to advice and will just plod onward, convinced that if we just try hard enough, it will work. Frequently we feel more and more

negative about our efforts. Trying to do the same thing over and over, with the same bad results, is a good definition of madness. This is why we humbly sit down with someone else and talk about what is happening and why. If we do wind up worshipping the rules rather than God, we are in trouble.

It is difficult, I know, to find someone we feel we can trust and in whom we can place our confidence and hope. This is why spiritual direction can be so very valuable to us if we truly want to spiritually grow.



# Schedule of Services

**Sunday, June 13- 3rd Weekend after Pentecost**

**10:00 AM - Intentions of the Leo & Mary LaDouceur Family**

## 4TH WEEKEND AFTER PENTECOST

**Monday, June 14 - Elisha, Prophet**

*No Service Scheduled*

**Tuesday, June 15 - Amos, Prophet**

*No Service Scheduled*

**Wednesday, June 16 - Tychon the Wonderworker & Bishop**

*No Service Scheduled*

**Thursday, June 17 - Manuel, Sabel & Ishmael, Martyrs**

*No Service Scheduled*

**Friday, June 18 - Leontius, Martyr**

*No Service Scheduled*

**Saturday, June 19 - Jude, Apostle**

*No Service Scheduled*

**Sunday, June 20 - 4th Weekend after Pentecost - Tone 3 - Father's Day**

**10:00 AM + Repose of John Kushner & Health of John Dicky Sr**

**John & Janet Dicky**

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

creation. (Diversity reigns supreme in God's creation). Opening one's heart is not as simple as opening the door to one's house. "Knock and the door will be opened," says the Lord. What is true for most of us is that we will always need to knock, without respite, in order to be sure that the door is set ajar a little.



There is, as it were, an atmosphere of mystery in the expression "Opening one's heart." The statement touches on something that is very intimate. To enable us to open ourselves to the world, we may appeal to various organs of our body. One may ask someone to open his mouth to speak, to open his ears to pay attention, to open his eyes to be vigilant. But the expression "opening one's heart," the word *heart* is not understood only in the concrete sense of the organ. It also designates a place which, in a symbolic sense, can be opened or closed.

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

St. Michael the Archangel  
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church  
6340 Chase Road  
Dearborn, MI 48126

Rev. Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Pastor

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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 Wawter  
313.624.9867



## THE BEATITUDES INTERPRETED: GREGORY OF NYSSA

The first account of creation found in Genesis tells us that we are created in the image of God: “God created man in the image of God: “God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” This verse tells us that God decreed that to be created in His image and have the potential to grow in His likeness we must desire to become more like Jesus Christ.

But what does it mean to be created in the image and likeness of God? Is there a difference between image and likeness? If so, what does each entail? Some of the Holy Fathers made no distinction between the two terms; the majority, however, did. It seems that the conjunction *and* donates a difference. We don't say for example that the sky is blue *and* blue. If there is no distinction then the statement “image and likeness” is redundant. Thus we will focus on the teachings of the Fathers who saw the distinction. One author explains quite succinctly:

The Holy Fathers see the image of God in the very *nature* of the soul, and the likeness in the moral *perfecting* of man in virtue and sanctity, in the acquirement of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, we receive the image of God from God together with existence, but the likeness we must

acquire ourselves (i.e., *obviously in cooperation with God's Spirit*), having received the possibility of doing this from God.

In other words, the image of God is a part of being human. *Every* person is created in God's image. This “stamp” of the Divine cannot be taken away. The likeness of God, however, comes to us as we grow in our Christian lives, through repentance, asceticism and participation in the life of the Church.

Kallistos Ware explains the distinction in much the same way. According to Ware, the Greek Fathers who drew a line between image and likeness agreed that the former is static (*image*) and the latter is dynamic (*likeness*). Ware writes that the image “denotes man's *potentiality* for life in God, the likeness his *realization* of that potentiality. The image is

that which man possesses from the beginning and which enables him to set out in the first place upon the spiritual Way; the likeness is that which he hopes to attain at his journey's end.

As I see it, the *image* means that we share in a limited manner the powers of God (i.e., to create, love, imagine, think etc.) with only the potential to use these powers for our own spiritual growth and development and the building of God's Kingdom in the here and now. We have to freely choose to cooperate with God's Spirit to actualize our “potential.”



## THE DOCTRINES OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY



As early Christians became more integrated into the common life of the empire, they were faced with pagan neighbors who were hostile to the new religious group and disliked their way of life. In the past these newly baptized Christians had lived like gentiles, but now they did so no longer. This was irritating for the pagan majority. Their antagonism towards Christians, moreover, was probably encouraged by the local authorities. This was not official persecution but unofficial harassment. In a recent commentary, J.N.D. Kelly argues strongly and convincingly that the letter is a unit and rejects the assumption on the basis of

the text itself, that the author addressed first Christians who were not being persecuted and then those actually persecuted. Peter speaks also in the first part about their martyrdom as a reality and the king of suffering spoken of here does not differ from that referred to in the second part. In both parts the author had the same churches in mind, and the theme of suffering, among various other themes, gives unity to this epistle.

The letter is addressed to Christians in five specified regions of Asia Minor. This is a circular letter, and the order of the Roman provinces given in its introduction, from Pontus to Bithynia, was the route that the bearer of the letter would be expected to take. The Christians in these regions are characterized “as aliens and exiles,” as those without citizenship or permanent home in this world. They are “the exiles of the dispersion” that is, of the *diaspora*. Originally the term *diaspora* referred to those Jews who lived outside Palestine. Here the term is not applied to them but to Christians scattered throughout the world. Like “exiles,” they hope one day to return to their homeland. Yet their minds are not set on an earthly Jerusalem, but on a heavenly one. Their “commonwealth is in heaven, and from it they await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

As I continue this article, I will assume 1 Peter to be a genuine letter addressed to Christians in Asia Minor at the time of their persecution, which was limited to their part of the world. It is an epistle of courage in suffering Christ. Why did He do it?

***Why not pick the Epistle and read it?***

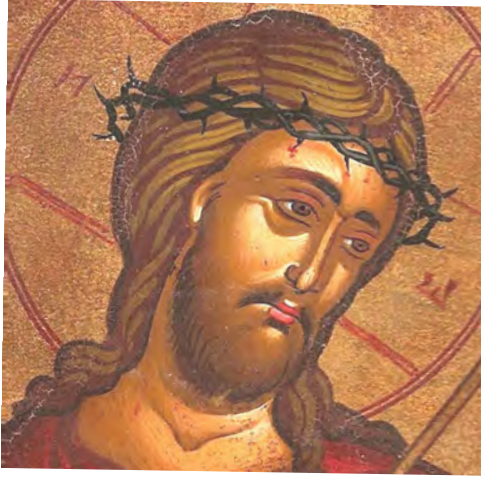


# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, STL, Ph.D.  
Vol. 68 No 24 3rd Weekend After Pentecost June 12-13, 2021

### VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH



When we bring into the presence of Jesus the hurtful feelings we have, we know that we have to ask him to help us deal with these feelings and to heal them.

At this point in the prayer, we may make a choice, if not to do one of these things or the other, at least to determine which of them we will do first. Whether or not any memories have come forth, we may feel the need to pray for a simple healing for the emotional state in which we now find ourselves in the presence of Christ. Knowing that we have felt this way many times before and that our inability to understand

and direct these feelings has led us to great unfreedom, we may want to pray simply to ask the Holy Spirit to comfort us, strengthen us, reveal to us the good uses to which this feeling may be directed, and show us a way out of any “blind alleys” in relationships into which these feelings have led us in the past.

Another opinion, if some memories have come forth, is to pray for healing of memories by seeing Christ in these events of our lives. In doing so, we continue to be honest with the Lord about our feelings in these situations, but as we see Him in these situations we observe carefully what He says and does, how He treats us and others, and what He asks us to do to resolve the situations. We open ourselves to all the love and comfort He is desiring to give us to heal the hurt of these events, and we open ourselves to change our attitudes towards others as He directs us.

I suspect that on first reading this seems very dense and esoteric - hard to understand. Sometimes things have to be read over and over. This is all about getting rid of “hurt feelings” we may have from some past events and which still fester in our hearts and souls. If I hang on to “hurt feelings” I prevent myself from spiritually growing. Past events are just that - PAST EVENTS. Hanging on to them stops spiritual growth.



### *Prove Your Faith by Your Trust*

'Look at the birds of the air,' says Jesus. What a splendid example for our faith to follow! If God's providence bestows an unfailing supply of food on the birds of the air who neither sow nor reap, we ought to realize that the reason for people's supply running short is human greed. The fruits of the earth were given to feed all without distinction and nobody can claim any particular rights. Instead, we have lost the sense of the communion of goods, rushing to turn these goods into private property. The birds do not know famine because they do not claim anything specially for themselves and neither do they have any envy of others. 'Consider the lilies of the field: not even Solomon in all his glory was

arrayed like one of these. If God so clothes the grass which is alive today and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe one of you!' Listen to these stupendous and uplifting words. With this parable of flowers and grass the Lord urges us to hope that God will also be merciful to us. Nothing is more persuasive than a glance at unthinking creatures who have received such beautiful dress from Providence. Surely we should be all the more ready to believe that human beings, if they entrust themselves completely to God and free themselves of all their worries, will not lack anything.

*St. Ambrose of Milan*