

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*Icon of the Call of the Apostles (Luke 5:1-11)*



**September 25, 2016**  
**19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 2**  
**OUR VENERABLE MOTHER EUPHROSYNE**

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 26 – OCTOBER 2**

**PLEASE NOTE:** SATURDAY EVENING VESPERS WILL RESUME ON OCTOBER 1.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1 – *PROTECTION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD; THE HOLY APOSTLE ANANIAS, ONE OF THE SEVENTY; OUR VENERABLE FATHER ROMAN THE MELODIST; PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE (1949) OF BLESSED NYKYTA (NICETAS) BUDKA, FIRST BISHOP OF CANADA, AND CONFESSOR OF KARAGANDA*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy with lesser blessing of water.

6:00 PM – Great Vespers for Sunday

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2 – *20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; THE HOLY-PRIEST MARTYR CYPRIAN; AND THE HOLY MARTYR JUSTINA; AND HOLY ANDREW, FOOL FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST*

8:45 AM – Divine Praises

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners



**ПРАЗНИК – PARISH FEAST**

*Mark your calendars.*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2,

IS OUR ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF  
THE HOLY PROTECTION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD  
ПОКРОВ.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO JOIN US.

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for  
brethren to dwell together in unity!*

Suggested donation:

Adults - \$12.00;

school-aged children (11- 17) - \$8.00;

children 10 and under – Free.

# PSYCHOLOGY AS THE NEW SACRAMENT

*Fr. Stephen Freeman*

The creation of the “two-storey universe” was an unintended consequence of the Protestant Reformation. I have recently been enjoying Brad Gregory’s *The Unintended Reformation*, in which he traces the various historical currents and ideas that gave rise to the modern secular notion of the world. It is a magisterial treatment, and I recommend it to serious students of history, as well as anyone wanting to better understand our modern culture. I have written many times about the notion of a two-storey universe, one in which the so-called “real world” is neutral territory, inherently devoid of religious content. It has as well a “second-storey” in which spiritual things are relegated to “upstairs” and somehow cordoned off from daily existence.

Gregory traces this through philosophy, theology, politics, a whole host of concerns, and gives a spot-on account of the multiple narratives, world-views and explanations that run through the modern mind. Very similar to Alasdair MacIntyre’s analysis of modernity, he notes that our culture is a mass of contradictions, the aftermath of the assault on the much more homogenous world-view of the late Middle Ages. One particular victim of this unintended revolution has been the sacramental world-view that was the dominant mind of Catholicism at the time (and still is officially), just as it is today within Orthodox theology.

What is lost with the sacramental world-view isn’t simply the belief that

in the Eucharist, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, but the belief that such a thing is either possible or desirable. For many contemporary Christians, the absence of Christ’s body and blood in their lives in any manner they consider “real,” is simply unnoticed. There is, however, a deep absence that is worth pondering.

The sacramental world is utterly permeated with meaning and spiritual communion. It is not isolated to the Eucharist. Indeed, the Eucharist is something of a pattern for all of life. Everything within daily life carries the possibility of the Divine. Time moves through a calendar in which the days of the week and the whole of the year are a collection of occasions in which people encounter the reality of Christ’s saving work. None of this disappeared entirely with the advent of modernity. Orthodox and Catholic Christians still attend a Church in which all of this is true, but they increasingly do so in a culture where it is not. One result of this is the consumerizing of the sacramental life. We get the sacramental stuff we *like*, attend some of the feasts, but mostly leave the calendar on the wall. We worship in a sacramental world but often live elsewhere.

With the disappearing of the sacramental world, the presence of God has not been utterly rejected. Such a rejection, I suspect, would have been an absence too difficult for believers to bear. But, as sacramental reality receded, substitutes were found. The non-sacra-

mental world of the post-Reformation is largely peopled with a distinct collection of individuals, largely conceived as centers of consciousness. Sacramental reality gives way to a *psychologized* notion of reality. We share ideas, thoughts and feelings, but do not consider ourselves to have sacramental communion with other people or other things. God becomes a Personality among personalities. In a world whose governing philosophy is Nominalism, little else is possible.

This is the basis for the modern notion of a “personal relationship with God.” The phrase is utterly dominant in large parts of modern Christianity. For many, it is considered the absolute minimum requirement for anyone claiming to be a Christian. And yet, the phrase does not appear until sometime in the 20th century. It is not simply a new phrase; it describes a new idea.

One dominant strain of modernity pictures the world as a network of “relationships,” that is, a web of affiliations, formal and informal, that comprise the collection of people whom we value and who value us. God has simply been added to this network.

In classical terms, however, the “personhood” of God bears little resemblance to the psychological construct referenced in modern usage. This fact brings into question the modern experience of “personal relationship,” and suggests that it is fraught with psychological projection and wish-fulfillment. The late 18th century, as well as the whole of the 19th century, were times in which extreme forms of religious ex-

perience became quite common. The various “Great Awakening” movements were marked by crowds swooning and falling down as well as other emotional manifestations. The Holiness and Pentecostal movements had their beginnings in these emotion-laden revivals, often multiplying experiences into new extremes. Today, various irruptions of Pentecostal fervor are greeted as yet one more “new move of the Holy Spirit.”

Doubtless, extreme emotional expressions have been present in Christianity throughout its history. However, only in the modern period have these expressions (and their milder form referenced as a “personal relationship”) replaced sacramental reality as the theological test of God’s truth. Baptism is thus despised by many, unless it follows an emotional experience now dubbed “being born again,” something that classically always named Baptism itself.

In contemporary practice, however, a newly-imagined world of psychological experiences has pushed aside everything else as it constitutes a new reality. **It is not surprising that the “experience” of one’s gender is now seen as more important than the actual *biology* of one’s gender.** Marriage is seen as a contractual affirmation of a psychological relationship, and not the actual union of a man and a woman.

Psychology has, in a sense, become a new form of sacramentality, much more preferable to modern tastes in that it is infinitely malleable. **Psychological experience can be anything I want it to be – a consumer’s utopia!**

By the same token, the sacramental world-view seems less “real” to modern sensibilities. The bread and wine continue to look like bread and wine, and we are not even asked to “experience” them as something else. We ask, “Did you get anything out of that service?” The sacramental answer would be quite clear. The psychologized answer invites various efforts to create feelings and experiences. It is an invitation to delusion as seen from the classical sacramental world.

A transition from the popular world of psychologized relationships to the sacramental world of classical Christianity is difficult. Our culture is dominated by a psychologized notion of reality. What it declares to be “real” is easily seen as real by those who have not begun to question their world. However, it is a very weak basis for spiritual stability (even as it is for a marriage).

Teaching a sacramental understanding to those in contemporary culture is difficult. While classical Christianity acknowledges the variety of psychological experience, it does not give it much attention, or spiritual significance. The sacramental worldview is rooted primarily in doctrine and teaching, and confirmed by experience, though an experience that is rightly understood as *noetic* rather than psychological. The great strength of a sacramental understanding is its grounding in reality – **not as I think it – but as it is**. The psychological approach to God seeks to be *moved*; the sacramental seeks to be *still*.

In Christ, God became what we are, but without sin. Much of what we imagine in our psychologized world is little more than the dizzying swirl of the passions caught in a cloud of imagination. Who Christ is, as the incarnate God/Man, is not known by assuming Him as a Personality among personalities. What it means to be Person is something we ourselves have yet to become. The way of life described in the older, classical form of Christianity, is the steady path towards that self-emptying personhood.

The Cross of Christ utterly altered reality, regardless of how we might *feel* about it. The world is sacrament and symbol, sign and signification. The presence of God is as palpable and real (and yet more real) than the ground on which we walk. The one-storey universe abides among us.

**Fr. Stephen Freeman says:** *I will add an ominous observation to the article. With the psychologization of reality (“what I think it is, is what it is”) the need for raw coercion in the political realm is required. **Since there is no grounding in a fixed reality (outside of the mind), the only way to establish order is to impose it on the minds around you.** All of the recent gender legislation (and such) is an attempt to require agreement from the population as a whole to the psychological claims of a few. The arguments cannot be made in any other way. All of the tools of psychological enforcement play a role in this latest turn in modernity. Propaganda, advertising, shaming, bullying, speech control, etc. It is the darker side of a culture that is abandoning everything other than its own chosen mind.*

## **Spiritual Combat in the Life of the Christian**

From the moment of one's Baptism, every Christian enters into spiritual combat. There we die to sin, in order to live for God. This battle, as the apostle Paul teaches, is not about wrestling "... against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (*Eph* 6:12). The Christian engages in spiritual warfare by being armed with prayer, fasting, and almsgiving; we thus cleanse our thoughts and achieving dispassion. Saint John Cassian teaches that spiritual combat helps a person achieve perfection: "This battle is in accordance with the will of God. It serves human good and awakens in a person ardent striving for greater perfection."

### **Fasting and Almsgiving**

Christians have fasted since ancient times. It was and is a way of imitating the forty-day fast of Christ during which he fought the devil's temptations and overcame them. Fasting as a means of spiritual combat was further developed by monastics, who saw it as a means of achieving purity of heart. Fasting takes hold of the entire being: the body through restraint in food and drink, and the soul through restraint of the passions. Saint John Chrysostom teaches: "Do you not eat flesh? Feed not upon indecency by means of the eyes. Let the ear fast also. The fasting of the ear consists in refusing to receive slander and calumnies ... For what does it profit if we abstain from birds and fishes; and yet bite and devour our brothers and sisters?"

## **ДУХОВНА БОРОТЬБА В ЖИТТІ ХРИСТІЯНИНА**

Кожен християнин від свого Хрещення вступає в духовну боротьбу, в якій помирає для гріха, щоб жити для Бога. Ця боротьба, як навчає апостол Павло, точиться «не проти тіла й крові, а проти начал, проти властей, проти правителів цього світу темряви, проти духів злоби в піднебесних просторах» (Еф. 6,12). Християнин веде духовну боротьбу, озброївшись молитвою, постом і милостиною, очищаючи помисли й досягаючи безпристрасності. Святий Касіян навчає що духовна боротьба допомагає людині в осягненні досконалості: «Ця боротьба згідна з волею Божою. Вона служить для людського добра, будить у людині ревні прагнення до вищої досконалості»

### **Піст і милостиня**

Давні християни постили, наслідуючи сорокаденний піст Христа, під час якого Він боровся проти спокус диявола та переміг їх. Піст як спосіб духовної боротьби розвинуло чернецтво, бачачи в ньому засіб осягнення чистоти серця. Піст охоплює всю людину: тіло - через стриманість у їжі та питті, душу - через стриманість від пристрастей. Святий Іоан Золотоустий навчає: «Ти не їси м'яса? Не споживай нескромностей своїми очима. Нехай постить і слух; а піст слуху в тому, щоб не приймати лихослів'я та наклепів. Нехай і язик постить від сквернослів'я і лайки... Яка користь, коли ми стримуємося від споживання птиці й риби, а братів угризаємо та пожираємо?»

Fasting is inextricably linked with almsgiving:

In the day on which you fast you will taste nothing but bread and water; and having reckoned up the price of the dishes of that day which you intended to have eaten, you will give it to a widow, or an orphan, or to some person in want, and thus you will exhibit humility of mind, so that he who has received benefit from your humility may fill his own soul, and pray for you to the Lord.

Almsgiving as a manifestation of love for one's neighbour is an imitation of God himself. It was God who first revealed his mercy towards us.

Піст нерозривно пов'язаний з милостиною.

«У день, коли постиш, споживай лише хліб та воду. А те, що ти звичайно споживав би, маєш віддати вдові, сироті чи потребуючому. Таким чином ти мушиш самому собі в чомусь відмовити, щоби з твоєї відмови хтось інший отримав користь, щоб наситився й помолився за тебе Господеві».

Милостиня як вияв любові до ближнього є наслідуванням самого Бога, Який першим виявив Своє милосердя до людини.

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## Sunday offering for September 18

Amount	Number
\$15.00	2
\$17.00	1 (loose)
\$20.00	3
\$25.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$85.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$400.00	1
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\$797.00	

Parishioner Total: \$797.00

Average / parish household (42): \$10.22

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

**Deficit: (\$1403.00)**

**Year-to-date deficit: (\$38,756.00)**

Special Collection for Sobor Total to date: \$653.00

Total collected from Fundraising Luncheon: \$265.00

### PARISH COMMITTEES FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Myra Heltsley  
Stephen Hojsan  
Maria Hughes  
Bohdan Kniahynyckyj

### PASTORAL COUNCIL:

Vladimir Bachynsky  
Olena Bankston  
Gabriel Espedal  
Mark Hartman  
Luke Miller

### STEWARDSHIP (FUNDRAISING) COMMITTEE:

Bohdan Knianynyckyj  
Susan Avant  
John Heltsley (*fundraising consultant*)

### SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Olena Bankston  
Olga Fedunyak  
Michael Miller  
Olga Miller  
Lubomyra Yoldas



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква  
Святого Йоана Хрестителя  
St. John the Baptizer  
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

4400 Palm Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91941  
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

**Website:** [stjohnthebaptizer.org](http://stjohnthebaptizer.org)

**Pastor:** Fr. James Bankston  
[frjames@mac.com](mailto:frjames@mac.com)  
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

### ***Lower Your Net***

Can you imagine the look on Peter's face when he realized how many fish were in his net? No wonder he dropped to his knees! He realized that he was in the presence of someone totally "other," someone he felt compelled to call "Lord" (Luke 5:8). From that moment on, Peter's life was changed. Now he was going to fish with a spiritual net, catching men and women for the Lord.

Jesus is still calling his disciples to lower their nets for a catch. But practically speaking, what does lowering our nets look like? First and foremost, it means acting and speaking in such a way that we shine the light of Christ into others' lives.

Picture yourself carrying a big, invisible fishing net beside you and asking the Lord to sweep as many people as possible into it. Remember, He is the One who does all the

catching. Your part is to let your net down by practicing the kind of actions and behaviors that will attract people to Him. In other words, you are the "bait" that can draw others into the kingdom. As people see the light of Christ in you, they will be drawn toward it, so that Jesus can sweep them into the large net of God's kingdom.

Peter was fairly skeptical when Jesus first asked him to let down his nets. The best response he could conjure up was something along the lines of: "I'm just doing this because you asked me to." And look how miraculously Jesus worked! So even if you feel like you have been "fishing" for a long time with few results, go ahead and throw that net out one more time today. You may just be amazed at the results!

**For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit  
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