

SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN



Icon of Christ and the Samaritan Woman



April 24, 2016

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA – SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN
THE HOLY MARTYR SABBAS THE GENERAL AND HIS COMPANIONS**

**ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!
ВОІСТИНУ ВОСКРЕС!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
TRULY HE IS RISEN!**

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 25 – MAY 1

SATURDAY, APRIL 30

Please Note: No Vespers

SUNDAY, MAY 1 – *SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA - SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN; THE HOLY PROPHET JEREMIAH; CORONATION OF POCHAVIY ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD (1773); PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE (1951) OF BLESSED KLYMENTII (CLEMENT) SHEPTYTSKY, ARCHIMANDRITE OF THE STUDITES AND CONFESSOR*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

*If you are reading the bulletin during the Liturgy (including the homily), please **stop** and be attentive – будьмо уважні!*

Don't Be A Fish Out Of Water

St. John Chrysostom, the superb homilist who was called the "Goldenmouthed", was especially concerned for the spiritual and moral development of his flock and, as a result, he was especially interested in teaching them how to pray.

As trees cannot live without water, so man's soul cannot live without prayerful contact with God, he taught. If you deprive yourself of prayer, you will become like a fish out of water because as water is life for a fish, so is prayer for you.

Fr. James will be away next weekend. Fr. Frank Avant will serve the Divine Liturgy at the normal time of 9:30 AM.

Leave all human injustices to the Lord, for God is the Judge, but as for yourself, be diligent in loving everyone with a pure heart, and remember that you yourself are a sinner and in need of God's mercy.

..... – St. John of Kronstadt

Feast of the Ascension

Thursday, May 5th

One of the Twelve Great Feasts. Don't miss it! It is an obligatory feast for all Ukrainian Catholics. Make plans now.

**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner!**

LIFE IN A SACRAMENTAL WORLD

Fr. Stephen Freeman

August 21, 2012

At the ordination of a priest, the consecrated Body of Christ is placed in his hands. He is told to “Guard this!” until the coming of Christ. It is a very solemn moment – the beginning of a lifetime in which a man’s relationship to bread will never be the same. It is also something of a conversion – a movement from the secular inert character of matter towards a world of sacrament, mystery and icon. This same movement should not be restricted to the ordained priesthood – for it is the most essential element of the Christian life. All of us live in a world that is sacrament – the priesthood of the Church exists for a ministry within the Church – but humanity itself was created for a priesthood of all creation. The words directed to a priest at his ordination apply to all of us: “Guard this!”

Protestant teaching early on isolated the text in 1 Peter 2 that describes believers as a “royal priesthood,” and interpreted it in a polemical manner that negated the special character of the ordained priesthood. Many Christians today have no sense of priesthood, whether it be the priesthood of Christ or of themselves. “Priest” has ceased to have much modern meaning.

Orthodoxy holds that Christ is the one, true priest. The priesthood exercised within the Church is a participation in Christ’s priesthood. But what do we mean by priesthood in the first place? How is Christ our priest?

For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins (Heb. 5:1).

The most essential act of priesthood is offering. The priest presents our offerings to God on our behalf. He gives us the blessing of God on God’s behalf. Christ’s self-offering both to the Father and to humanity is the very definition of priesthood. The focus on Christ’s sacrifice as “payment,” as well as other images, have tended to weaken the sense of offering inherent in His death. Offering, for a variety of historical reasons, has been deeply diminished from the religious consciousness of many. The inner dynamic of the Eucharist is an offering. To live the sacramental life is to live a eucharistic life, a life of offering.

For most, the word “offering” immediately invokes the image of “money.” This is not incorrect, even if it is limited. Money can certainly be an “offering,” but our thoughts on the subject probably miss the point. Money indeed has a sacramental character (as does all of creation). In a modern culture, money is something of a sacrament of all of our activity. As Christ Himself noted, it remains the primary means by which we may know the heart (Matt 6:21). Interest in spiritual things by those who do not practice “tithing” (returning to God a tenth of what we receive) can easily become an exercise in vanity. The failure to

give alms generously (as in the tithe) can reduce spiritual activity to the level of a hobby. In this matter, the Orthodox differ in no wise from the non-Orthodox. Our culture is deeply enslaved by Mammon. Moderns are deeply suspicious of all things having to do with money. We see greed everywhere around us (except within ourselves). Non-believers think of Churches as rich and despise them. The myth of Church wealth is largely just that – myth. (The place of ancient land-holdings and State support of the Church, in lands such as Greece, is a separate topic).

Generosity is more fundamental than fasting (people seem to pay great attention to the latter and little to no attention to the former). I have occasionally been told that modern welfare states have made tithing a thing of the past because our taxes now support the poor, etc. Taxes, no matter how well spent, are never a matter of offering, they are not eucharistic in nature. They are the object of coercion: no one voluntarily pays more than they forced to. What Caesar does with what belongs to Caesar is of no spiritual consequence to us. It is what is offered to God that constitutes a priestly existence.

Generosity is fundamental – but it only lays a foundation. St. Maximus the Confessor taught that “man is a microcosm”: we are the entire universe gathered into personal form. If the physicists are correct, the largest number of elements within our bodies were formed in the furnace of the stars. In the words of pop-singer, Joni Mitchell, “We are stardust.”

At the same time, we are the universe gathered into conscious form. In human beings, the universe has self-understanding and can speak. Our ability to speak is perhaps the most profoundly human thing we do. The universe exists as a gift – there is no necessity in its existence – it is created out of nothing. But in the words and volition of human beings, the gifted universe can freely offer itself back to the Giver. It is this cycle of Giver-Gift-Giving that is the heart of all priestly existence (and the true heart of the Christian faith). In Chrysostom’s liturgy the priest prays:

Therefore, I entreat Thee Who alone art good and ready to listen: Look down on me, a sinner, Thine unprofitable servant; and cleanse my soul and heart from an evil conscience; and by the power of the Holy Spirit enable me, who am endowed with the grace of the priesthood, to stand before this, Thy holy table, and perform the sacred mystery of Thy holy and pure Body and precious Blood. For I draw near to Thee, and bowing my neck I implore Thee: Turn not Thy face away from me, nor cast me out from among Thy children; but make me, Thy sinful and unworthy servant, worthy to offer gifts to Thee. For Thou art the Offerer and the Offered, the Receiver and the Received, O Christ our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

... “*The Offerer and the Offered, the Receiver and the Received...*” This is the very depths of the Eucharist. Read through the Eucharistic liturgy and note the use of the word “offer” and its various iterations. It is an exercise in truly hearing what is being said.

To live the sacramental life is to live the life of offering. We offer has been offered to the Receiver and the Received. To behold the Received (and the Offered) in every element and moment of creation is to see the world in its truth. This is not an exercise in the imagination or a mere interpretation of the world. The fathers teach that the pure in heart actually perceive the “Logos-ness” of creation. The relationship between Logos and His creation is true, real and substantial, not merely referential.

Modern Christians are profoundly non-sacramental. The simple statement, “We use things,” says it all. The world around us consists of things and is not perceived in its Christic relation. That this is so is only a comment on the frailty of our sinful state. That we are willing to think that this frailty is an actual description of the truth of things, however, is a comment on our perversity.

Secularism is the life of the anti-sacrament. Priesthood ceases to be a life of Offerer and Offered, Receiver and Received. In the secularized world the priest becomes something of a civil servant, a functionary. Priests are hired and fired, compared and judged. They are measured by worldly standards of effectiveness or the simple whims of parish politics. If this is the case of

the ordained priesthood, then it is worse still for the priesthood of all believers. Rather than bearing the dignity of the Microcosm, the anti-sacrament modern man reduces himself to Thing and User. Users and Things cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

Chrysostom again gives us words:

O Lord God almighty, Who alone art holy, Who accepts the sacrifice of praise from those who call upon Thee with their whole heart, accept also the prayer of us sinners, and bear it to Thy holy altar, enabling us to offer unto Thee gifts and spiritual sacrifices for our sins and for the errors of the people. Make us worthy to find grace in Thy sight, that our sacrifice may be acceptable unto Thee, and that the good spirit of Thy grace may dwell upon us and upon these Gifts here offered, and upon all Thy people. Through the compassion of Thine only-begotten Son, with Whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



Let God Arise

Fr. Daniel C. Kovalak

“If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:14).

In God’s “strategic plan” for the life of the world and its salvation, He decisively intervened, in Person, “trampling down death by death.” In the radiant light of Jesus’ glorious resurrection, darkness is overcome, creation is renewed, disappointment and despair no longer have the final word, sorrow is turned to joy and death has lost its sting. There is hope for all because Our God lives!

In his youth, the popular Christian apologist, C.S. Lewis, boastfully declared his belief in no religion, saying they were all myths created by man. Years later, as he considered the implications of Christ’s resurrection, he experienced a heartfelt conversion. In a reflection entitled *Surprised by Joy*, he wrote, “No word in my vocabulary expressed deeper hatred than the word interference. But Christianity placed at the center what then seemed to me a ‘transcendental Interferer.’ There was no region even in the innermost depth of one’s soul which one could surround with a barbed wire fence and guard with a notice: ‘No Admittance.’ And that was what I wanted; some area, however small, of which I could say to all other beings, ‘This is my business and mine only.’”

Here, Lewis expresses the sentiments of many today which are seldom spoken. We all want to feel independent, safe and secure in ourselves; to fence ourselves in and say to others and even to God, “Back off! Don’t bother me. Leave me alone.” Indeed, we have the right to say this.

But our crucified and risen Lord—the “Transcendental Interferer”—also has the right to step into our human situations, relationships, circumstances, schedules and plans to pursue us with His divine Love and persistent mercy. As He says to the self-satisfied Church of Laodicea, so He says to us: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelations 3:20).

Are we willing to open the door and invite into every aspect of our lives Him Who is incessantly knocking, knowing full well His Almighty presence will “rock our worlds,” challenge our status quos, and interfere with our personal agendas?

After Our Lord raised His friend Lazarus from the dead, His critics posed a significant question to one other: “What shall we do, for this Man works many signs?” (John 11:47). This is a question with which every generation—indeed every soul—must wrestle. How do we welcome and respond to “this Man;” this “Transcendental Interferer?”

The early Church knew exactly what to do! Not only did they invite the Knocking Christ to fully enter and transform their personal lives, but as the new “Body of Christ,” they proceeded to preach, teach and invite all to do likewise. And their enthusiastic and resolute conviction bore amazing fruit; the Lord multiplied the believers and added to the Church, daily. So persuasive and convincing was the testimony and living witness of the apostles that they were accused of “turning the world upside down” (Acts 17:6).

This is the faith we must each rediscover and apply to our busy lives and troubled times—the Paschal faith that rolls away the stones from our self-imposed tombs and shouts with David, “Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.” This is the faith that responds eagerly and joyously to the incessant knocking of the Transcendental Interferer and opens the door to His Divine Love and persistent mercy.

By His abundant and amazing grace, the Risen Lord is still knocking. He stands ready to fill us with faith, light, hope, forgiveness, mercy and love—to interfere in our lives in wonderful and extraordinary ways—if we but open the door!

“Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” (1 Peter 1:3-4).

“VIBRANT PARISH” PRAYER

O Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, as you once gathered lost sheep that they might hear Your voice and be Your flock, so also today graciously look down from heaven upon our parish community, and send down on it Your Holy Spirit, that it might be a place to receive the joy of Your Good News. Strengthen us with Your presence, and always gather us together in prayer. Grant us the spirit of serving others, so that in our parish all might encounter You, the merciful God. Bless our spiritual leaders with Your wisdom, and inspire us to generously give of our time, talents and treasure for the building up on Your Kingdom. Unite us in peace and harmony, as befits Your community of love. Instill in us a missionary spirit, and let our parish community shine with the light of the Gospel, with prayer and good works, inviting all to share in the divine life, so that Your Name, O Savior, may be praised, together with Your eternal Father, and Your most-holy, good and life-giving Spirit. Amen.

Sunday offering for April 17

Amount	Number
\$5.00	1
\$13.00	1 (loose)
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	2
\$25.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	3
\$70.00	1
\$80.00	1
\$85.00	1
\$300.00	1
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\$863.00	

Parishioner Total: \$858.00
 Guest: \$5.00

Average / parish household (42): \$11.00
 Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: (\$1342.00)

Year-to-date deficit: (\$17,669.00)

PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.

Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

Pastoral Council:

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Social Committee Chair:

Megan Hartman (619) 540-4291

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Kniahynyckyj: (619) 303-9698



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
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Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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The Living Water of the Holy Spirit

The water that I shall give will become in him a fountain of living water, welling up into eternal life. This is a new kind of water, a living, leaping water, welling up for those who are worthy. But why did Christ call the grace of the Spirit water? Because all things are dependent on water; plants and animals have their origin in water. Water comes down from heaven as rain, and although it is always the same in itself, it produces many different effects, one in the palm tree, another in the vine, and so on throughout the whole of creation. It does not come down, now as one thing, now as another, but while remaining essentially the same, it adapts itself to the needs of every creature that receives it.

In the same way the Holy Spirit, whose nature is always the same, simple and indivisible, apportions grace to each man as He wills. Like a dry tree which puts forth shoots when watered, the soul bears the fruit of holiness when repentance has made it worthy of receiving the Holy Spirit. Although the

Spirit never changes, the effects of His action, by the will of God and in the name of Christ, are both many and marvelous. The Spirit makes one man a teacher of divine truth, inspires another to prophecy, gives another the power of casting out devils, enables another to interpret holy Scripture. The Spirit strengthens one man's self-control, shows another how to help the poor, teaches another to fast and lead a life of asceticism, makes another oblivious to the needs of the body, trains another for martyrdom. His action is different in different people, but the Spirit himself is always the same. *In each person, Scripture says, the Spirit reveals His presence in a particular way for the common good.*

The Spirit comes to enlighten the mind first of the one who receives him, and then, through him, the minds of others as well.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

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