

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Saints Peter and Paul -- June 29th



June 26, 2016

6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 5

OUR VENERABLE FATHER DAVID OF THESSALONICA;

PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE (1941) OF BLESSED ANDRII ISHCHAK, PASTOR OF SYKHLIV, PROFESSOR OF THE LVIV THEOLOGICAL ACADEMY, AND MARTYR

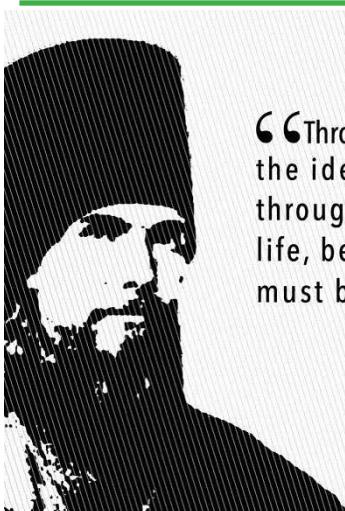
SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 27 – JULY 3

SATURDAY, JUNE 18

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

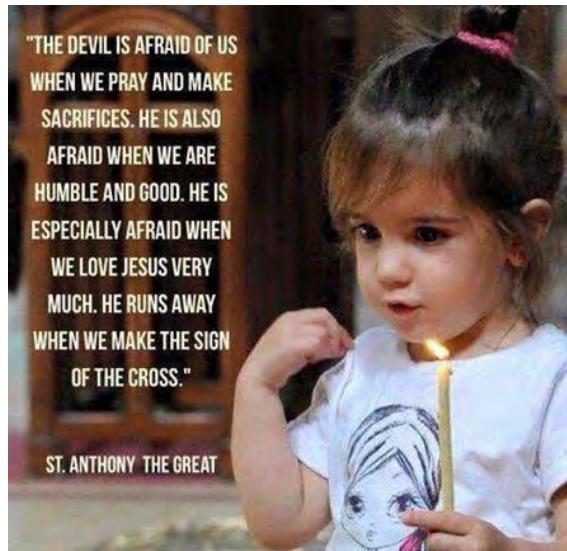
SUNDAY, JUNE 19 – 7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; THE HOLY MARTYR HYACINTH

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners



“ Throw out of your head
the idea that you can,
through a comfortable
life, become what you
must be in Christ. ”

ST THEOPHAN
THE RECLUSE



OUR CULTURE HAS ACCEPTED TWO HUGE LIES. THE FIRST IS THAT IF YOU DISAGREE WITH SOMEONE'S LIFESTYLE, YOU MUST FEAR OR HATE THEM. THE SECOND IS THAT TO LOVE SOMEONE MEANS YOU AGREE WITH EVERYTHING THEY BELIEVE OR DO. BOTH ARE NONSENSE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO COMPROMISE CONVICTIONS TO BE COMPASSIONATE.

– RICK WARREN
FROM NATIONALREVIEW.COM

Please Note:

When you are away, please don't forget that the church still relies on your contributions. Our bills do not go on vacation. Your absence on any Sunday does not negate your obligation to support your home parish.

Haven't Seen Someone in a While?

Give them a call or send them an email. See how they are doing. Let them know that you not only miss them but also care enough to see if everything is okay. A kind word can go a long way.

FOREWORD FROM THE FATHER AND HEAD OF THE UKRAINIAN GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Reverend Fathers,

With great joy I recommend this *Practical Workbook for Parishioners* on the theme of “Stewardship of Divine Gifts: A Christian Way of Life.” The Synod of Bishops of the UGCC explored this theme during its session in September 2014, and the “Working Group for the Realization of the Strategic Development of the UGCC till 2020” took the main points expressed during the Synod and gathered them in a practical format for implementation in our parish communities.

I am particularly grateful to Bishop Ken (Nowakowski), who is chairman of the Working Group since October 2011 and who carries responsibility for this new addition to the series of publications in our “Vibrant Parish – a Place to Encounter the Living Christ” program. I also wish to thank Bishop David (Motiuk) of Edmonton, Bishop Paul (Chomnytsky) of Stamford and Rev. Dr. Andrij Onuferko for their work on the individual themes in this publication.

Every person is gifted in some manner. At the same time, Our Lord God placed upon us a responsibility to properly use these gifts, that is, to share them for the glory of God and for the good of one’s neighbor.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I hope that Workbook will help you deepen your understanding of the sense and meaning of God’s gifts in the building up of the Kingdom of God, so that you might commit yourselves to a more generous gifting of time, talents and treasure for the good of your parish community.

Let everything be done for the glory of God and for the good of His People!

The Blessing of the Lord be upon you!

+ Sviatoslav

“STEWARDSHIP OF DIVINE GIFTS – A CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE”

“We offer to You Yours of Your own on behalf of all and for all.”

(Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom)

INTRODUCTION

“Remember, O Lord, those who bear fruit doing good works in Your holy churches and remembering the poor. Send down Your mercy upon all of us.” (Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom)

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- At the Synod in September 2014 our Bishops dedicated considerable time to reflect on “Stewardship of Divine Gifts – a Christian Way of Life.” They would like to share key aspects of that reflection with the clergy and faithful laity of our Church.
- Developing a good understanding of Christian stewardship will help us strengthen not only our parish communities, but also our personal spiritual lives, our families, our Church as a whole.
- We live in an increasingly secular society, and so good Christian Stewardship will help reinforce those Christian foundations and values, which modern society increasingly seems to forget or neglect.

I. STEWARDSHIP GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Every Gift is from God

Stewardship of Divine gifts begins with an awareness that **everything comes from God and ultimately belongs to God**, and serves to give Him glory. At each Divine Liturgy we pray: “for all good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from You, the Father of Lights.” The Church also encourages us in its services to “commend ourselves, and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.”

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- A simple definition of Stewardship: **the wise use of human** (natural and spiritual) **as well**

as material resources for the building up of the Kingdom of God.

- Stewardship begins with an **awareness that everything comes from God** and ultimately belongs to God.
- The most important gift we have received is that of **salvation in Jesus Christ**
- That gift requires our response: **sacrifice, dedication and a sense of shared responsibility** for the life of the Church and her mission on earth.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. My life is not my own but God’s. What does this phrase say to me?
2. Do I try to foster an awareness of God’s ownership over all of creation? How?
3. If everything we are and have is a gift from God, how does that impact my life as a Christian?
4. What does the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ mean to me? Is there anything more important for me in my life?
5. When in the Liturgy we are encouraged “to commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God” how does this phrase speak to me personally?

2. The Mission of the Church

The Word of God calls us to conversion and to a life in faith. Liturgy grants us the possibility to unite ourselves to the one sacrifice of our Lord, given on the Cross, and to give our life in sacrifice to God. Through works of mercy, *diakonia (service)*, we allow others to experience how good the Lord is.

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- The six elements of “**The Vibrant Parish: a Place to Encounter the Living Christ**” should always be present in our minds and hearts.

- Every parish community, no matter how small, is called to make the first three elements a priority in its life and mission: preaching the **Word of God and Catechesis, Liturgy and Prayer, and Serving One's Neighbor** through works of mercy and justice.
- The other elements flow from the first three. They focus on who does the work and with what resources (**Leadership-Stewardship**), on how and why we fulfill our mission (with a sense of **Communion-Unity**), always mindful of the Gospel mandate to preach the Kingdom of God to the world (**Missionary Spirit**).
- This is **not a theoretical or abstract mission**, but one that is fulfilled concretely in our own time and where we live by actual people, by US!
- It is our calling and mission to **place the gifts we have received in God's service**.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Have the priorities of the “Vibrant Parish” (Word of God and Catechesis, Liturgy and Prayer, Serving One’s Neighbor, Leadership-Stewardship, Communion-Unity, Missionary Spirit) become a priority for my personal and family life? In what ways?
2. Do I understand that I am called to help build the Kingdom of God in my time and where I live?
3. Am I committed to do my part in placing the world at the service of God and His plan of salvation for humankind?

3. Stewardship of God’s Gifts is rooted in the Sacred Scriptures

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

1 Pt 4:10

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- Our understanding of Christian Stewardship is rooted in Sacred Scripture
- Texts such as the parable of the just and unjust servant (Lk 12:42-46) or the parable on the talents (Mt 25:14-30, par. Lk 19:11-27) emphasize that we are caretakers of the gifts of the Kingdom of God, not its owners.
- The Greek word *oikonomos* (literally: “house-ruler”) is used in texts, such as 1 Pt 4:10 (good *stewards* of God’s varied grace) and 1 Cor 4:1-2 (*stewards* of the mysteries of God... it is required of *stewards* that they be found trustworthy).
- In the New Testament we also find mention of *oikonomia*, used in reference to: 1) God’s plan of salvation for the human race, 2) the fulfillment of that plan in Jesus Christ, 3) our participation and responsibility in the fulfillment of that plan.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Which of the servants best describes me in the Parable of the Talents (Mt 25:14-30)?
2. What does it mean when we say that our life and all the things we possess are given to us “on loan” from God?
3. Am I a “good steward of God’s varied grace” in my personal and family life, in my parish community?
4. ***Stewardship of Divine gifts – Our Shared Responsibility***

“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”

Rom 12:4-8

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- Christian Stewardship involves all members of the Church, and not just the bishops and clergy.
- St. Paul teaches us that we are all members of one Body (see Rom 12:4-8) and that in the Church each person has his or her purpose.
- All of us have gifts and blessings, but also limitations, inadequacies, and weaknesses. That is why we are called to work together, supplementing in one another that which is lacking.
- We need to trust the Holy Spirit, who always supplies the Church with all that is needed for her to fulfill its mission.
- We have different gifts, perform different services and activities. To each is given the manifestation of the Holy Spirit “for the common good” (see 1 Cor 12:4-7)

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. How do I understand my calling to be an active member in the Body of Christ?
2. Have I ever asked myself what my gifts might be, and asked in prayer for the Lord to show me how I might use those gifts?
3. How do the words of St. Paul apply to me when he speaks about all Christians using their gifts “for the common good” (1 Cor 12:7)

II. STEWARDSHIP OF GIFTS TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURE

1. Stewardship of Time

“Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, ‘In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

2 Cor 6:1-2

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- Time is a unique gift, given to all, but not in equal measure.

- Time is a non-renewable resource: it cannot be reacquired or exchanged. We must choose whether to use it wisely or waste it.
- We usually think of time in a chronological sense, but the Scriptures also have a different understanding of time from God’s perspective of eternity. With the coming of Christ chronological time is called to be transformed into supernatural time, the time of invitation and salvation, that is, God’s time. Frequently the Greek word kairos (sometimes translated as “season”) is used in this sense.
- There are moments when we can experience this transformation of time, especially in the liturgical life of the Church: the eternal salvation offered in Jesus Christ is made present “here, today for us.”
- We need to examine how we manage time in our personal lives.
- We need to “make time” for God, dedicating a portion of our time each week for God’s community of faithful.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. In what ways do I, as a Christian, experience time as a gift from God?
2. Do I practice good personal time management or do I often find myself wasting time on things that really don’t matter?
3. In what ways do I use my personal time to serve others?
4. In what ways do I offer my gift of time to help build up my parish community?

2. Stewardship of Talents

“And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’”

Mat 25:20-21

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- When we look at our Christian community we can see that God bestowed us with many talents. We should ask God for discernment on how to best use these talents for His glory.
- We have natural talents, intellectual and physical, which we can and should develop throughout our lives.
- We receive our spiritual talents from the Holy Spirit. They allow us to act with a sense of not our, but God's will, and move us to serve our neighbor for the sake of the Gospel.
- The Church speaks of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa 11:1-3) and also provides us with some tools to recognize when the Holy Spirit bears fruit through us and others (Gal 5:22-23).
- The Christian community needs both spiritual and natural gifts to fulfill its mission.
- We need to be able to offer our talents to the Christian community. No skill or ability is too small to be given back to God.
- Whatever we offer should be given in a spirit of thanksgiving to God, recognizing in Him the source of all that is good in us.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

- What are my natural talents and do I share them with my parish community?
- Do I pray for discernment, so that I may grow in spiritual gifts and be open to sharing them with others?
- Do I recognize the spiritual gifts of my pastor and my fellow parishioners? What are these gifts? How do I show my appreciation for these gifts?

3. Stewardship of Treasure (material resources)

“...Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or

under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”

2 Cor 9:6-8

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- If time and talents are a gift, then the material compensation which is produced by their application should be seen as a gift as well.
- The Church is called to act in this world and cannot fulfill her mission without a material foundation.
- The Christian community may find the material resources it needs in the form of an unsolicited gift. It may produce something of value or offer services for which it can justly seek compensation. However, for the most part the Church must ask for donations.
- Not only does a parish need the financial and material support of its members, but so does and Eparchy and the Church as a whole.
- St. Paul encouraged early Christians to be generous: “...for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:6-8).
- The Christian community must always receive with gratitude, never judging a person’s generosity based on the size of the gift.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Do I acknowledge as God's gift that which I have acquired through honest labor?
2. Do I have a sense of ownership for my parish and recognize my responsibility to financially support its mission?
3. How do I respond to special appeals, either from my Bishop, from His Beatitude or the Holy Father?
4. Do I judge others on the basis of how much or how little they give?
5. Do I teach generosity to my children and give them good example?

III. CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF PARISH STEWARDSHIP

1. Tithing: four hours per week for the building up of the Kingdom of God

"Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord"

Lev 27:30

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- The biblical practice of tithing (offering one tenth of earning to the Lord) was practiced in early Christian Rus'-Ukraine, and indeed is still practiced in many Christian denominations today. Might we take another look at this practice, rethinking it in the context of a broader understanding of stewardship?
- St. Paul encourages generosity, as we have seen, but he doesn't specify amounts. It would seem, however, that the early Church had the same understanding found in the Old Testament: that the first and best portion of anything we acquire belongs to God (see 1 Cor 16:1-2).
- Might we not today commit ourselves to a modified form of tithing? Concretely: four hours per week dedicated to God's works. What we cannot offer in its monetary equivalent we should offer in time and talents.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Is the tithing example of St. Volodymyr the Great something that I should be emulating in my life?
2. What does it mean to me when we say that the first and best belongs to God?
3. Do I think that it's reasonable to expect that I donate one tenth of my time, talents and treasure to the building up of the Kingdom of God?

4. Do I trust God when it comes to my personal financial security? (Mt 6:33: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.")?

2. Concrete opportunities for stewardship based on the elements of the "Vibrant Parish"

"Remember, O Lord, those who bring offerings and do good works in Your holy churches, and who remember the poor. Reward them with Your riches and heavenly gifts of grace; for earthly things grant them heavenly ones; for temporal ones, eternal, for corruptible, incorruptible."

(Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great)

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- All of us should ask ourselves: how can I contribute to making my parish "a place to encounter the Living Christ." We can all contribute in ways, great and small.
- The best way to think about our commitment and involvement in the parish community is from the perspective of the priorities of "the Vibrant Parish," especially its first three elements.
- Each parish needs to make a list of its needs and possibilities for pastoral action, and reach out to its members, asking them to consider offering their time and talents.

PRACTICAL TIME-TALENT OPPORTUNITIES:

It is time to make a commitment. Can I see myself taking on responsibilities or engaging in:

NOTE: The lists provided below are given as an example. Each parish is invited to use it, expanding or shortening it according to its concrete needs and possibilities for action.

The Word of God and Catechisis

Catechist

Catechist assistant

Christian initiation instructor (for parents and godparents)
pre-Marriage instruction volunteer
Adult education facilitator
Bible study leader/member
Catechumenate team leader/member
Parish School volunteer
Youth group leader or coordinator
Young adult leader
Librarian / Media resource volunteer
Parish bookstore volunteer

Ecumenical team member
Parish social committee member
Kitchen volunteer
Social media coordinator

Missionary Spirit

Evangelisation committee member
Visiting lapsed Catholics
Outreach to newly arrived
Outreach to the unbaptised
Parish Neighbourhood Outreach
Media relations volunteer
Parish hospitality (Ushers/greeters)

Serving One's Neighbor (*Diakonia*)

Adult day care volunteer
AIDS program volunteer
PRO-LIFE ministry volunteer
Bereavement volunteer
Soup kitchen volunteer
Visiting elderly volunteer
Visiting sick volunteer
Visiting shut ins volunteer
Parish food bank volunteer
Needy children volunteer

Liturgy and Prayer

Altar server
Liturgy Committee Member
Sacristan
Reader
Cantor
Choir member
Choir Director
Prayer group leader
Prayer group host
Prayer group member
Caretaker of vestments and linens
Propheta baker
Families praying for special intentions
Church cleaning volunteer
Church decorator (eg. feast preparation)

Leadership-Stewardship

Financial Council member
Pastoral council member
Stewardship Committee/Team member
Auditor
Sunday collection volunteer
Fundraising volunteer

Various professionals:

*Medical doctor
Plumber
Carpenter
Electrician
Computer software specialist
Computer hardware specialist
Parish grounds maintenance – landscaping
volunteer
Parish building maintenance volunteer
Cleaning volunteer
Lawyer
Realtor
Mechanic
Auto / parish equipment maintenance
volunteer
Parish Website maintenance volunteer
Graphic designer
Newsletter/bulletin work volunteer
Secretarial work volunteer
Office volunteer
Parish archivist*

Communion-Unity (*Koinonia*)

Parish photographer
Brotherhood member
Sisterhood member
Sunday coffee volunteer
New immigrant volunteer
Baby and child care during church event
Transportation for the immobile to church
services and events

3. Pastoral and Financial Councils, Pastoral Planning

POINTS TO REMEMBER::

- Two parish organizations are called to play an important role in the life of a parish.
 1. The PASTORAL COUNCIL assists and supports the pastor in planning and organizing the broader activity of the parish community.
 2. The FINANCIAL COUNCIL advises, assists and supports the pastor in financial and administrative matters.
- The Handbook for Pastoral Planning is an important tool to help a parish prioritize its activities with a view towards its mission.
- It is important for parishioners to know the financial state of its community so that they might also have a deeper sense of their responsibility in material matters.

INSTEAD OF QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Every parish should develop an annual Pastoral Plan, invite all parishioners to participate, especially in the first two sessions of Pastoral planning: Count our Blessings (What are we doing already?) and Dare to Dream (What would we like to do?).

Parishioners should be invited to consider whether in the future they might be willing to serve in the Parish Pastoral and Financial Councils.

Practical Suggestion: If you have a large parish, you may consider creating a “Stewardship Committee” within the Pastoral Council. This would be a group of individuals who would assist the pastor in developing lists of tasks within the parish, and look for individuals who have specific talents, who might serve in Parish Council structures or help the parish fulfill its Pastoral Plan. If you are a smaller parish, then at least consider calling together a small

“Stewardship Team” of Pastoral Council members. Members of such a Stewardship Committee or Team might be called upon to assist in presenting this WORKBOOK to the parish community.

IV. STEWARDSHIP OF GOD’S GIFTS – A WAY OF LIFE

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

Ephesians 5:1-2

KEY POINTS:

- Christian Stewardship is a way of life and a continuous process of conversion in order to make God a priority in our lives.
- It requires a spirit of sacrifice and a readiness to share of one’s time, talents and treasure.
- It is nothing new, for the Church has always had to administer its many gifts, sometimes effectively, but sadly, sometimes less so.
- It is the Gospel in action by concrete individuals, in a concrete place, in a specific time, with those gifts-resources, which God has given us.
- Let us, therefore, together be good stewards of God’s gifts and share them for the building up of His Kingdom.



Stewardship Prayer

Christ our True God, Lover of mankind,
You call us to be Your disciples and good
stewards of all Your many gifts.

Open our minds and hearts to a greater
awareness and deeper appreciation of
Your countless blessings.

Transform us through the power of the
Most Holy Spirit to nurture a stewardship
way of life marked by faith-filled prayer,
service to our neighbor and generous
sharing.

Teach us to be faithful servants of Your
gifts. With Mary, your Mother's help, may
we return ten-fold the gifts entrusted to
us.

Bless our Parish with a deepening
devotion to liturgy, a growing
commitment for service, and increasing
levels of generosity as we work to
advance the mission of both our parish
and eparchy.

For if not us, who? If not here, where?
If not now, when? If not for Your Kingdom,
why?

O Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten
Son of the eternal Father, You have said
that without You we can accomplish
nothing. How true are Your words, O
Lord. Thus we pray, good and loving
Lord: if it be Your will, help us to complete
this work. May it glorify You with Your
Father who has no beginning and Your
all-holy Spirit. Amen.

Sunday offering for June 19

Amount	Number
\$5.00	1
\$14.00	1 (loose)
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	3
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	3
\$80.00	1
\$85.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$300.00	1
<hr/>	
\$824.00	

Parishioner Total: \$824.00

Average / parish household (42): \$10.56

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: (\$1376.00)

Year-to-date deficit: (\$25,485.00)

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:

Vacant

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Kniahynyckyj: (619) 303-9698



**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

Pastor: Fr. James Bankston

frjames@mac.com

Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

The Gifts of the Holy Apostles

Let us beg also of God that He would put on us, who have shed the old man, the heavenly Christ, even now, so that established in great joy and thus led by Him, we may be granted the greatest tranquility. For the Lord, who wishes to fill us with a taste of the Kingdom, says: "Without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). And still, by using the Apostles, He knew how to enlighten many others. Even though they were creatures, they fed their fellow servants. They taught them how to become a brother and a son of Christ, to live in a more outstanding way than the rest of people, namely, they sanctified the very heart and mind, likewise the thoughts, so that men directed those to

God. And thus God secretly bestows life and all their heartfelt needs, and dedicates Himself to them. For when a person surrenders to God his secret possessions, that is, his mind and thoughts, not occupying himself with any other matter or thought or distraction, but subjecting himself to a certain constraint, then the Lord makes him a sharer in His mysteries, in holiness and great purity. He also gives Himself as heavenly food and spiritual drink.

Pseudo-Macarius

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.ecpubs.com