

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
TENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of Saints Myron and Dimitrius -- August 17th



August 17, 2014

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

POSTFEAST OF DORMITION; THE HOLY MARTYR MYRON OF CYZICUS, PRESBYTER

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 18 – AUGUST 24

PLEASE NOTE: There will be **NO** vespers during the Summer months unless noted in the bulletin.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24 – *ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR EUTYCHES, DISCIPLE OF ST. JOHN THE THEOLOGIAN; PIDHORETS' K ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD (1772)*

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!*

THE LITURGICAL YEAR IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

By Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos

The Liturgy and all the sacraments in the Orthodox Christian Church begin with the prayer:

"Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, always, now and forever".

The aim of all Christian living – praying, studying, working and resting is to bring us before the awesome and renewing reality of the kingdom of God. Although God's kingdom may be described by many words (God's will, rule, power, lordship, majesty, glory and grace), put simply it is God's personal holy presence. To live in the reality of God's kingdom is to live in the presence of God – with a sense of wonder, joy and thanksgiving in all circumstances and for all things.

What is the significance of the liturgical year?

The liturgical year is a way of discipline in prayer, a pattern of worship, an anchor of

support for the life of the Church. But it also has deeper significance. The late George Florovsky, an eminent Orthodox theologian of blessed memory, has taught us that worship is a response to the call of God who has already made known His redeeming love to us through decisive events culminating in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. Worship has two major aspects: remembrance (anamnesis which means not only historical remembrance but also re-living the events commemorated) and thanksgiving (including praise and doxology).

Thus the liturgical year, by bringing unceasingly before us God's mighty deeds of salvation and the reality of God's kingdom in our midst, is the sanctification of time and thereby the true fulfillment of both personal and corporate aspects of our lives as Christians. Far from being simply a calendar, the liturgical year in the life of the Church – the life of Christians living in community as brothers and sisters –

in awareness of God's kingdom, remembering the entire communion of Prophets, Apostles, Saints and all of God's people on earth and in heaven, being renewed by God's saving love, helping one another, witnessing to Christ's good news, and waiting for the fullness of the coming kingdom according to God's timing.

"If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord" (Rom. 14:8)

Orthodox worship proclaims the centrality of Christ. The liturgical year celebrates the presence of the mystery of Christ in the life of the Church and seeks to make the living Christ a renewing lifesource for every Orthodox Christian.

Do not the most important feasts of the year celebrate the good news of the life and work of Christ, the Annunciation, His Birth, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism, Transfiguration, Triumphal Entry, Passion Week, Easter, Ascension and His gift of the Spirit on Pentecost day, all of which are based on the New Testament? Do we not remember and re-live His death and resurrection on each

Sunday (*Kyriake*, that is, the Lord's Day) and in each Liturgy? Do we not continuously hear about Jesus' teachings, miracles and encounters with men and women from all walks of life? Even the Feasts of the Prophets, the Apostles, the Theotokos and the Saints, properly understood, point to the centrality of Christ, the Saviour and Lord of all.

This is the essential message of the Orthodox faith: Christ lives and desires to be one with us in a union of holy love. He is the Leader of our life and the Celebrant of the sacraments. He is the Good Shepherd who continues not only to seek out the lost but also to feed those who are already in His flock. Are we prepared to hear His call? Are we willing to open our hearts to Him? Do we seek

Him as eagerly as He seeks us? I would like to end this preface with the image of Christ the Pursuer from the conclusion of St. John Chrysostom's 15th Homily on 1 Timothy, a passage to which George Florovsky has pointed. In the final part of this Homily, St. John Chrysostom meditates on Christ's love for us and exhorts Christians to glorify Christ for His countless material and spiritual gifts – the same Christ that we often neglect and perhaps even secretly dislike for pursuing us and seeking to change our lives. Then St. John has Christ speaking to us in these words:

“But what shall I say? It is not in this way only that I have shown my love to you, but also by what I have suffered. For you I was spit upon, I was scourged. I emptied myself of glory, I left my Father and came to you, who hate me, and turn from me, and are loath to hear my name. I pursued you, I ran after you, that I might overtake you. I united and joined you to myself, “eat me, drink me,” I said. In heaven above I hold you, and on earth below I embrace you. Is it not enough for you that I have your pledge of salvation in heaven? Does this not satisfy your desire? I again descended on earth (through the Eucharist): I not only am mingled with you, I am entwined in you. I am eaten, broken into tiny particles, that the fusion, intermingling, and union may be more complete. Things united remain yet (sometimes) in their own limits, but I am interwoven with you. I would have nothing separating us. I will that we both be one”.



FOUR-STAR PARISHIONERS – ★ ★ ★ ★

By A Ukrainian Orthodox Priest

The success (or failure) of a parish is dependent upon the synergy among pastor and faithful. Successful parishes aren't dependent upon any one person (this includes the priest!) for their success. In a successful parish the parishioners cooperate with each other, they fulfill their own obligations, and contribute what they can into the common treasury of deeds, wisdom and finances.

I used to work in a restaurant. It was a nice place with good food, a pleasant ambience, and class. We had many regulars, but one of them stood out. The owners called him the "four-star customer." He would visit often. He'd bring business clients there. He'd come for dinner with his family. He'd celebrate important occasions there. He was a good tipper. He was always pleasant to be with and a pleasure to serve.

I'm sure you see where this is going. What would a "four-star parishioner" look like?

A four-star parishioner. . .

. . . **prays.** The whole point of being a member of the Church is to know God. Union with Christ is the goal of all Christian endeavor. We must therefore seek to always have God in our thoughts and on our lips. This is prayer. A four-star parishioner prays (privately or with their family) upon arising in the morning, before retiring in the evening, and before meals during the day. They might do more, but they won't do less.

. . . **worships God.** If we know God we will worship Him. We are created to worship Him. He commands us to worship Him. Why? Worship creates unity and feeds us spiritually. Worship teaches us who we are and who God is. All human beings worship – either the one True God or an idol, and every idol is fundamentally an image of ourselves. God or me? Which will it be? Four-star parishioners attend the worship

services of the Church. Unless it is impossible to do so, they're in Church every Sunday and Great Feast Day and on as many lesser holy days as is feasible.

. . . **partakes in the Holy Mysteries.** Just because I must approach for Holy Confession and Communion once a year doesn't mean that I should only approach for Holy Confession and Communion once a year. If Confession and Communion are a good thing, why not approach more often? The Church exists (among other things) in order to make the Holy Mysteries

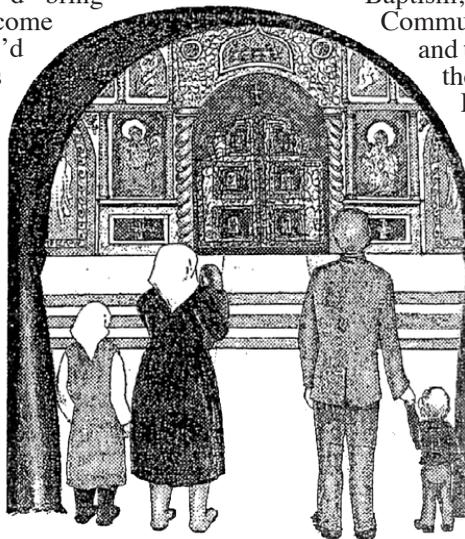
– Baptism, Chrismation, Confession, Communion, Marriage, Ordination, and the Oil of Prayer (anointing of the sick) available to the faithful.

Four-star parishioners live a sacramental life: approach for Confession/Communion as often as possible, get married and buried in the Church, have their children baptized in the Church, etc.

. . . **supports the parish generously.** If the Church can't pay the bills, it can't stay open. If it doesn't have the money to do outreach work or educate the children, it will die. A four-star parishioner treats parish financial obligations with the same seriousness

as taxes. Don't pay taxes, go to jail. Don't support the parish, go to . . .

. . . **helps the poor.** At the Last Judgment, Jesus is going to ask us, "Did you feed me? Did you clothe me? Did you visit me when I was sick?" etc. (Mt. 25:36). All our religious acts should lead us to charitable acts on behalf of the suffering, the poor, and the needy. A quick reading of the first epistle of St. John or the epistle of St. James will underline this point better than I ever could. Four-star parishioners give their whole life to God – not just two hours on Sunday morning (if that!). This includes sharing their wealth with God's beloved – the poor.



... respects church leaders. The days are gone when men become priests because they're seeking some type of status in the world. Nor do people join the parish council because they're seeking fame or riches. The least we can do is respect those who lead our communities. Even when we disagree with them, we should do so respectfully. They're not perfect – but neither are we. A four-star parishioner always speaks respectfully to and about the parish and Church leaders. The words of Abraham Lincoln bear repeating: “No one should criticize unless they're willing to help.”

... respects their fellow parishioners. I once heard this terrible riddle: “What happens when a member of the Church is wounded (spiritually, emotionally, or personally)?” Answer: “Someone from the parish comes along and finishes them off!” It's a terrible riddle because it's often true. How often do we hear people spreading malicious gossip or delighting in the troubles of their brothers and sisters in Christ? A four-star parishioner doesn't gossip, doesn't impute evil motives to the actions of others, and doesn't try to build themselves up by tearing other people down. If we do love each other, we should speak positively and respectfully about each other and help pick each other up when we're down.

... fasts. There's an old saying: “The spiritual life begins with the stomach.” Fasting is a sign of our obedience to the Church; fasting builds unity within the community (just look at the example of the Jews or Muslims); fasting builds discipline (all discipline is fundamentally self-discipline); fasting brings God's blessings upon us. Four-star parishioners offer their table to the Lord. How we fast may occasionally differ due to individual circumstances, physical needs, or illnesses. But if we wish to be close to God, if we are obedient to God and the Church, we will fast according to the apostolic teaching and practice of the Church.

... works for the parish. In order for a parish to function, much needs to be done: singing in the choir; sitting on the parish council; teaching religion; visiting the sick; cooking; working with youth; preparing the bulletin; organizing social events; cutting the grass; painting the walls; preparing tax receipts; paying bills, etc.. God has blessed every one of us with talents that can be utilized for the growth and benefit of our parish. Four-star parishioners offer their talents and abilities to the Lord and to the parish.

... reads the Bible. The Bible is God's Word to us. The only condition necessary to successfully read the Bible is that we must read God's Word in order to put it into practice. Reading the Bible simply in order to discuss it—or even worse, discussing the Bible without having read it—will not help us draw near to God – in fact, the opposite will probably take place. A four-star parishioner reads the Bible every day: a passage from the Gospel, a passage from another New Testament book, and a reading from the Psalter as a minimum.

... takes responsibility for their children's souls. People often send their children to “religious” schools – Catholic or Protestant – and figure they don't need to send them to Church school. If we send our children to non-Orthodox schools, they won't learn the Orthodox faith. Every parish child should be taking part in the religious lessons offered by the Church, as well as being taught to pray at home and seeing the example of parents living a deep and authentic Christian spiritual life. A four-star parishioner makes sure that the young people of the parish are given a solid education in the Orthodox faith by parents (or other family members), clergy, Church school staff, and participation in the liturgical life of the parish.

... never stops learning about the faith. A Ukrainian saying goes: “A man must spend his whole life learning so that he can die an ignoramus.” Bible study classes, religious seminars, spiritual retreats, and adult education classes should be just as integral a part of the life of every mature Christian as professional development programs and inservice seminars are for teachers, doctors, auto mechanics, etc. This goes double for those in positions of leadership in the parish. Four-star parishioners take part in every bible study, seminar, retreat, and adult education class they are able to. When people fall in love, they want to learn everything about each other. If I love God, I'll want to learn as much as I can about Him.

What's stopping you from becoming a four-star parishioner?

HUMILITY – A KEY TO BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

From the writings of Bishop Ignatius



One elder passed seventy weeks in fasting, eating food only twice a week, as he begged the Lord to reveal to him the meaning of a passage in Holy Scripture. But God would not reveal it to him. Seeing this, the elder said to himself, “I

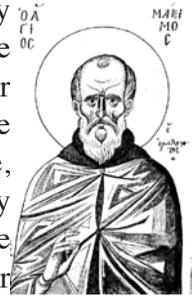
have labored long and hard, and I have accomplished nothing. I will go to my brother and ask him.”

When he had left his cell and locked the door behind him, an angel from the Lord appeared and said to him: “Seventy weeks of fasting did not bring you nearer to God. Now, however, when you have humbled yourself and resolved to go to your brother with your question, I have been sent to you to explain the meaning of this passage.” And fulfilling this, the angel departed.

ON THE BENEFITS OF ATTENDING THE LITURGY

St. Maximos the Confessor

It is necessary for every Christian to spend time in the holy church of God, and never to miss the celebration of the Divine Liturgy – for here, the holy angels have custody – they register the people going in each time and offer their angelic intercessions on their behalf. Each person who is found present at the Divine Liturgy, the grace of the Holy Spirit transforms, remolds, and truly remodels into a more divine image, conforming to Himself.



THE CHURCH NEW YEAR – SEPTEMBER 1ST

Every time we enter upon another year whether it be civil or ecclesiastical we have the opportunity to reflect upon the past and make changes for a better future. Let us ask ourselves: What practical changes can I make which will allow the Lord to act more in my life?

Can I do more in my spiritual life – prayer, study, almsgiving, stewardship? Can we do more as a community – outreach, charity, evangelism? How can I personally and we collectively play a part in making this coming year better than the previous year?

Going to the Hospital?

Please let your priest know, so that he can add you to the prayer list, or, if you like, pay you a visit. If you know someone else is in the hospital please let Fr. James know.

Prayers for Teachers and Students – August 24th will be offered for the new academic year next Sunday, August 24th. Teachers and students will be asked to come forward near the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

Looking Ahead

- Sunday, 8/24: Prayers for Academic Year
- Sunday, 9/1: Church New Year

Did You Know We're on Facebook?

“Like” us to receive our posts, and so that your friends can get to know your church a little. Who knows who else may “Like” us too? <https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-John-the-Baptizer-Ukrainian-Catholic-Church/137098752989860>

Fr. James will be away...

Fr. James will be out of town through 8/21/14. In case of an emergency please contact either Fr. Matthew Alejo of Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church at (858) 277-2511 or (661) 800-8383, or Fr. James Babcock at (714) 600-3660.

God's Extended Hand

FOCUS (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve) has provided us with a special bin for collecting donations of clothing, toiletries, etc. to be distributed at GEH. It is located near the door of the church hall.

PRAYER IS
MEANT TO BE
BREAD FOR DAILY
USE. NOT CAKE
FOR SPECIAL
OCCASIONS.

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.

Share 2014

We do not doubt the Resurrection of Christ, His gift of salvation to us all. How are we prepared to reciprocate for this most wondrous of gifts? Let us help our eparchy bring Christ's salvation to others by making a contribution to **Share 2014 – Annual Eparchial Appeal.**

Ми не сумніваємося у Воскресінні Христа і Його дару для нашого спасіння. Як ми готові віддячити Йому за цей найчудовіший із всіх дарів? То ж допоможемо нашій єпархії принести Христове спасіння до інших внесок в **Share 2014 – Єпархіальний Заклик.**

Goal:
\$120000

2014

Stewardship Pledges

Pledges received: 18

Pledges:
\$39116



It is impossible to plan any sort of budget until all pledge forms are turned in. If you haven't returned your pledge, please do so.

Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

Pastoral Council:

Fr. Deacon Frank Avant: (760) 805-1667

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Jeanine Soucie: (718) 674-4529

Social Committee Chairpersons:

Vacant: Please consider volunteering as chairperson.

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Knianicky: (619) 303-9698

Fr. Deacon Frank Avant: (760) 805-1667



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

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Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

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

He Drives out Demons

Our Redeemer and savior knew what great errors the devil had sown throughout the entire world by deception and with how many superstitions he had subjugated to himself the greatest part of the human race. But He did not want the creature formed "to the image of God" should any longer be driven onto the precipice of eternal death through ignorance of the truth. So He planted within the pages of the Gospel the manner of His judgment - which was such as to call back every person from the snares of this most cunning enemy, since no one would any longer be ignorant of the rewards to be hoped for by the good and the punishments to be feared by the wicked.

Because that instigator and author of sin whom "pride" first caused to fall and then "envy" to do harm, did not stand fast in the truth," he has put all his effort into "falsehood." He has manufactured from this most poisonous fountain of his craft every manner of deception. His

aim is to shut off any hope that human beings might have of attaining through devotion to that good which he himself had forfeited by self-exaltation. He would like to draw them into a partnership with himself in condemnation, since he himself cannot have access to that reconciliation which could be theirs ...

Because the ancient enemy makes use of these wiles ... Christ in His effable kindness wanted us to know what were to be the criteria for judging all humanity on the day of recompense. That way, while in this lifetime there is still available the medicine of legitimate remedies, while rehabilitation has not yet been denied to those who have been shattered, and while those who had long been sterile can still become fruitful before it is all over, the condemnation due injustice might be headed off and the reflection of God's criteria in judgment might never be removed from the eyes of our heart.

St. Leo the Great