

January 30, 2022
Three Holy Hierarchs, Sunday of Zacchaeus



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! ~ Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 3, pg. 135, Three Hierarchs: pp. 318 - 319

Divine Services for the Week:

- SUN., JAN. 30** **THIRTY SIXTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST,
THREE HOLY HIERARCHS, SUNDAY of ZACCHAEUS**
8:30 A.M. **DIVINE LITURGY**
+ **Lori and + Mark**, offered by Francis & JoAnn Hersh
- TUES. FEB. 1** **MEETING OF OUR LORD HOLY DAY, Anticipated**
6:00 P.M. **VESPERAL DIVINE LITURGY, Blessing of candles**
+ **Gordon Jn. Baptiste**, offered by Sr. Mary Virginia
- SUN., FEB. 6** **SUNDAY of the PUBLICAN and PHARISEE**
8:30 A.M. **DIVINE LITURGY**
+ **Philomena Rossi**, offered by Lillian Mansueti

Today's Gospel: Do you desire Christ?

This Sunday marks the first of five Sundays before the beginning of the Great Fast in preparation for the celebration of Holy Week and Pascha. The Gospel lesson for today is clear: everything begins with the desire to see Jesus Christ. Zacchaeus, the rich tax collector, desired to see Jesus so much that he even climbed a sycamore tree to get a good view, not worrying about what others thought of him. Jesus saw him, called him down and visited his house. Zacchaeus then acknowledged his sinfulness and voluntarily offered to give half of what he had to the poor and four times what he had taken from anyone by false accusation. The joy of the occasion is evidenced in Christ's words: *"Today salvation has come to this house... for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."* Zacchaeus' desire to see Jesus led to his salvation.

Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

February 5: Darlene Simunick

Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

None for the week

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

HOME – Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun, Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Mary Salamon, John Simunick

Ann Trombulak – **Rochester Manor:** (174 Virginia Ave., Rochester, PA 15074)

Josephine Maruhnich – **Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001)

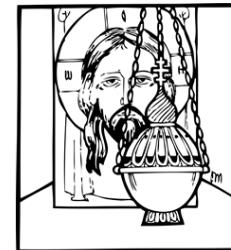
Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Wy, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Carol Huchko – **Concordia at Villa St. Joseph** (1040 State St, Baden, PA 15005)

Epistle Readers – Jan. 30: Louisa Hersh – Feb. 6: Joanne Futato

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – Jan. 30: M. Bobanic – Feb. 6: R. Mudron



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP
January 30 – February 5, 2022
Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:
For the Parishioners

Simeon, tell us, whom you bear in your arms, that you rejoice so greatly in the Temple? To whom do you shout and cry aloud: "Now I am set free, for I have seen my Savior?" This is He who was born of a Virgin; this is God the Word, Who came forth from God, Who, for our sakes, has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him!

(Vespers for the Encounter of Our Lord)

"Do not neglect good deeds and generosity, God is pleased by sacrifices of that kind." (Hebrews 13:16)

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The Healing Effect of the Mass and Divine Liturgy

by Most Reverend William C. Skurla

Mystical Healing of the Eucharistic

The third healing that takes place through the reception of holy Eucharist goes way beyond personal and societal healing. When we receive the sacred body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are sanctified and lifted beyond this world to the eternal. As with all sacramental mysteries, we make contact with the divine.

In the Roman Mass the priest says: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb." And the people answer: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

Upon distribution in the Eastern Divine Liturgy, the celebrant says, to each recipient "The servant of God, (Name), partakes of the precious, most holy, and most pure body and blood of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ for the remission of (his-her) sins and for life everlasting. Amen"

Both prayers remind us that we are changed by the reception of the Eucharist. The prayer of our Venerable Church Father John Damascene explains to us what happens when the faithful receive communion. The reception transforms the person.

"God, my God, all-consuming invisible fire, you make your angels flaming fire. In your inexpressible love, you have condescended to give me your divine flesh. You have allowed me to partake of your divinity by possessing your most pure body and precious blood. May they penetrate my entire body and spirit and all my bones. May they burn away my sins, enlighten my soul, and brighten my understanding. May they sanctify me, making a dwelling-place in me so that I too may be in you forever, with your blessed Father, and Your All-Holy Spirit, through the prayers of your most pure Mother and of all your saints. Amen."

The actual reception of the body and blood of Christ can reawaken our first memories of our first communion. It can also make up for our lack of individual or societal peace. The reception gives us a taste of the eternal banquet to come when we join all the faithful who have gone before us. The quiet divine presence stays with us as we participate in bringing healing to the world.

Christ is Among us! He is and Shall be! ~ Christos posred'i nas! Jest' i budet!

A Note from Father Geoff

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Last week I wrote about *believing* in the Christian faith. Today I want to write about *behaving*. Throughout the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments, the people of God are frequently given instructions on how to behave. Starting all the way back in Genesis, God gave a command to Adam and Eve: "You may eat food from every tree in the garden; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat." (Gen. 2.16-17)

Later, God would give Moses the *Torah*, the "Law" which would govern his chosen people. By living according to the Law, they would show themselves to be a distinct people, different from the pagan cultures around them. The Law included rules of both *morality* and rules of *ceremony*; or, we might say "ethics" and "liturgy." These rules were intended to show forth God's sovereignty, glory, and character.

"Laws" and "rules" are, in many of our minds, a negative sort of thing. Of course, we need laws to make a society function well. We need rules to organize a community or to play a game. And often these laws and rules are "thou shalt not." To live together in peace, we need laws against murder and theft. To play a game we need to not sneak a peek at our neighbor's cards when they're not looking. To be part of a club we must pay our dues. But we see them as limits on our freedom or autonomy.

In the New Testament, Christ summed up all of the Old Testament Law when he said that the Greatest Commandment was to Love God with all our heart, soul, and mind; and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22.37-40; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Leviticus 19.18). Note what Jesus does here: He says that the summit of the Law of God is found in *love*. In the Gospel of John, Jesus told his disciples: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." (13.34)

All of the ethical rules that our faith commends to us and all of the rituals, traditions, and ceremonies we may take up or participate in - all the *behaviors* of our Christian life - have their source in love and have love as their goal. St. Paul put it even more succinctly: "Love is the fulfillment of the law." (Romans 13.10) We don't behave in certain ways to appease God or to earn his favor. We behave as Christians because he *already* loves us and we live in that love. (see 1 John 4.16)

And Jesus told his disciples that the way people will know we are his followers will be because they have seen our love for each other (John 13.35). Let us pray for the grace to be ever more loving and for the wisdom to perform our Christian duties for the sake of love. For "God is love." (1 John 4.8)

For the Love of Jesus Christ,

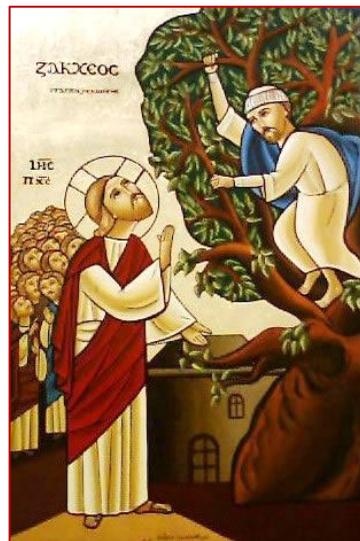
Fr. Geoff

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! ~ Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!

Sunday of Zacchaeus

Today the Church, through the proclamation of the Gospel, reminds us that the Lord sees and values things in a way that the world cannot understand. Oftentimes, what the world sees as strength is a pitfall for those who seek the Lord; and what the world sees as weakness is an opportunity for spiritual growth.

Zacchaeus, “small of stature” and despised by the Jews becomes the one who sees the Lord and welcomes him into his home. Why? The Fathers of the Church tell us that Zacchaeus was able to see the Lord, not because of the Sycamore tree, but because he set aside the self-righteousness of the world and the stature of honor and worldly dignity.



By becoming “small” and humble of heart, by opening his eyes to the Lord’s vision, Zacchaeus was able to rise above those around him to behold the Lord and welcome him into his home. By going to Zacchaeus’ house, Jesus confirmed for all that Zacchaeus had already made a home for the Lord in his heart.

Throughout the Gospel, those who are apparently weak become strong, the blind become able to see, the paralytics walk again, and this strength and healing is found in one thing: that the Lord has made himself present within them, that he comes in to “our house,” and for that we must “make haste” to come down to meet him.

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

1. How should a Christian judge himself differently than the world judges him?
2. Why was Zacchaeus’ willingness to climb up the tree a way in which we can see the humility of his heart?
3. Why did those around Zacchaeus despise his wealth while Jesus saw it as an opportunity for his salvation?

Excerpt from Christ our Pascha: The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God

The Announcement of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7): The Sermon on the Mount reveals life in God’s kingdom and points to the fact that the kingdom of God is God’s gift, not something earned through works of the Law. Only by receiving the kingdom in faith and obedience to the will of God does a human being become the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (see Mt 5:13-16). (#205)

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

The Three Holy Hierarchs: January 30

Today we honor the memory of the Three Holy Hierarchs. Who are they? The Three Hierarchs of Eastern Christianity refers to Basil the Great (also known as Basil of Caesarea), Gregory the Theologian (also known as Gregory of Nazianzus) and John Chrysostom. They were highly influential bishops of the Early Church who played pivotal roles in shaping Christian theology. Why do we celebrate them together every year on January 30th? Because of a DISPUTE! In Constantinople, a quarrel about which of the three theologians was the greatest was happening. In 1100, Our Fathers among the Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom appeared to Patriarch John in a dream and asked him institute one feast for all of them because they were equal before God as they declared: “There are no divisions among us, and no opposition to one another.” This ended peacefully the controversy amongst the faithful.



What kind of light do you give? - The person characterized by humility, gentleness, mercy and righteousness does not build a fence around good deeds. Rather, he ensures that these good fountains overflow for the benefit of others. One who is pure in heart and a peacemaker, even when he is persecuted for the sake of truth, orders his way of life for the common good. (*St. John Chrysostom*)

The Meeting of our Lord with Simeon and Anna, February 2



The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord was first observed in the Eastern Church as “The Encounter.” In the sixth century, it began to be observed in the West: in Rome with a more penitential character and in Gaul (France) with solemn blessings and processions of candles, popularly known as “Candlemas.” This feast day concludes the celebration of the Nativity and with the offerings of the Virgin Mother and the prophecy of Simeon, the events now point toward Easter.

Blessing of Candles

For the upcoming Feast of the Encounter of Our Lord, it is a pious and venerable tradition in our Holy Church to bless candles. It is impossible to imagine an Eastern Church without burning candles. Candles made of beeswax are used in our Holy Church as a form of sacrifice and devotion to God or Saints. They are used in various Divine Services and ceremonies and are symbolic of Christ, who is “the Light of the World.” According to a different symbolism, the two elements of a candle represent the two natures of Christ: the Divine (the burning wick) and the Human (the wax body). According to our venerable father Simeon of Thessalonica (XV century), the pure wax symbolizes the purity and innocence of the people offering it. The wax is offered as a sign of our repentance for our obstinacy and willfulness. The softness and malleability of the wax speak of our readiness to obey God. The flame of the candle shows the warmth of love to God. We should not put up a candle just for the sake of the ritual, with our hearts remaining cold.

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Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before and after Liturgies
 Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the church office
 Holy Mystery of Anointing Ask prior to surgery or serious illness
 Holy Mystery of Marriage Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding
 Religious Education Classes September through May, following Sunday Divine Liturgy
 St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club Everyone welcome to participate

Why have blessed candles in the home? - It is good and laudable to light candles at home when we pray, when the priest visits for a house blessing with Holy Water or Holy Unction, and even light a candle when we visit the grave of a loved one.