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ICON OF THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

In order to more deeply understand the icon of the Solemn Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem, we need to examine the scriptural accounts found in the four evangelists: Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:29-38; and John 12:12-18. Icon writers literally

his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he washes his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes; his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." Jacob, one of the great forefathers comprising the trinity of patriarchs, together with Abraham and Isaac, foretells

ing the she-ass who preferred to wear the yoke of the law in its infidelity, the foal born from it is elected, that is, a new people, coming from the old one through faith, is adopted and associated to the people of the nations.

Our Lord riding on the colt is perhaps the most salient prominent detail in this icon, in which He is shown descending into the city. This is often portrayed in the icon by showing Christ actually advancing down the slope of a mountain and also the head of the donkey is arched downwards. Jesus, the New Jerusalem, descended both spiritually and physically into the city of Jerusalem on the Sunday before His suffering, death, and resurrection.

What is very curious is that it is physically impossible to descend into the city of Jerusalem, as the topography requires an ascent into the Holy City. Even the Hebrew word employed by Scripture for traveling to Jerusalem literally translates into English as "going up" to the Holy City. The condescension of Our Lord, the theological aspect of Him becoming man and obediently following the will of His Father, is actually and concretely visualized in the icon. He descends from heaven and humbly accepts his death for the sake of our salvation.

Let us examine two major works to demonstrate the similarities and divergences in iconography through the centuries for this important feast. One of the earliest surviving depictions of the Entry into Jerusalem is found in the *Rossano Gospels*, a sixth century Byzantine Gospel Book, discovered in the town of Rossano, Italy, in the late nineteenth century. The parchment is purple-dyed and the Gospel texts are inscribed in silver letters indicating great respect for the Word of God. The Palm Sunday text is illustrated with a Byzantine icon in the upper portion of the page; underneath, the four evangelists point upwards to the illustrated scene, while underneath them is their corresponding text.

Christ rides on a gray donkey, whose head is upraised. As He rides across level ground, children are present everywhere. Interestingly, in this early depiction, Christ does not descend into Jerusalem, but proceeds on a flat plane into the city. Christ depicted as a king, vested in a royal purple *chiton*, with a gold *clavus* and *himation*, another detail peculiar to the *Rossano Gospels*. Two apostles follow after Christ; a palm tree is depicted in the background; a group greeting Christ holds palms upright, while children play at the city gate and some peer out of the windows of the walled city.

Some five hundred years later, in the mosaic-carpeted *Capella Palatina* (Palatine Chapel) in Palermo of 1150, iconographic details diverge significantly from the *Rossano Gospels*, yet they portray the feast as found in contemporary icons. The mosaic on the nave wall in the Imperial Norman Palace shows Christ descending steeply from on high into the city of Jerusalem. Saint Peter is on His left side, while Saint John, laying his left hand on the beast, is leading nine other apostles, following after Christ. Christ is shown with His usual purplish-blue himation over His crimson red chiton. He has His customary cruciform halo. Four children place their garments on the ground and welcome Christ and palm branches are strewn across the pathway. An enormous date-laden palm tree dominates the background. Three Pharisees, wearing *tallit* headdresses, seem to block Christ's access to the partially open city gates. Behind them, stand a group of people partially hidden by the city walls of Jerusalem.

Let us echo the praise of the Hebrew Youths as attend the Flowery Sunday Liturgy, welcoming our King, Jesus Christ, as He solemnly enters Jerusalem to endure His suffering, death, and resurrection for the sake of our salvation: *Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!*



Mosaic Icon of the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

paint the words of Sacred Scripture in color. In the Gospel of Matthew, we read that the even begins in Bethany, the hometown of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, located on the Mount of Olives, nearby to Jerusalem, as Our Lord ask His disciples to look for a donkey tethered to a tree.

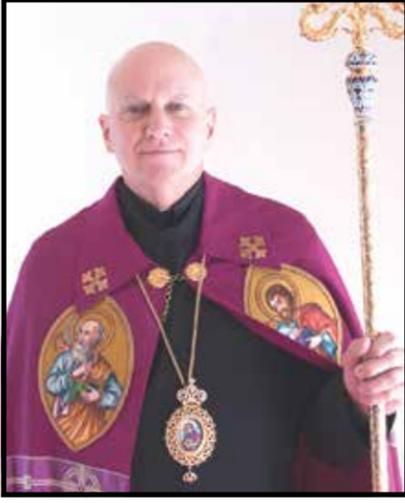
The triumphant arrival of the Messiah into Jerusalem on a donkey is foretold some five hundred years earlier by the Prophet Zechariah (Zechariah 9:9): "Rejoice, greatly, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Another prophecy of Our Lord's riding a donkey comes from the Patriarch Jacob's (also known as "Israel," the father of Joseph with the coat of many colors) last words to his sons, found in Genesis 49:11-12: "Binding his foal to the vine and

the binds a donkey to a vine, which can be viewed as a reference to the Passion and Suffering of Christ, particularly poignant as he employs Eucharistic terms such as grapes, wine, and blood.

Saint Ephrem the Syrian (4th century), in his commentary on the passage in Genesis, further clarifies the link to Christ: "When Our Lord came, He also bound His foal to the true vine. Just as all the symbols are fulfilled by Him, He would fulfill in truth even this that was handed down to them in likeness. Either there was a vine in Jerusalem outside of the sanctuary to which He bound his foal, or in that city from which the foal came, it has been bound to a vine. He said, 'If they say to you, "why are you untying this foal?," say to them, the Master requires it.'"

Another Church Father, Saint Rufinus (4th century), interprets the donkey as the Gentiles: after reject-



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



THE LIGHT OF CHRIST ENLIGHTENS EVERYONE

They say hindsight is twenty-twenty. When we began taking precautions against the virus one year ago, did any of us think we would be held down for a whole year by it? I'm sure we would all have done things differently if we knew what was coming. As a pastor, I wish that I spent more of the year talking about the opportunity for spiritual growth. The hermits and monks are held in high esteem in our tradition. We have 2,000 years of writings from monks to help us turn a lockdown into a spiritual liberation. I wish that I had laid out a one year roadmap for a spiritual journey. Well, hindsight is twenty-twenty. Even at the height of the pandemic last April and May, we thought in a month or two we would be back to normal.

Here we are in Lent a year later. Rather than regret the past, what can we do now for spiritual growth? How can we make the most of this Lent? The best starting point for spiritual growth is usually gratitude. If we are still alive, we can be grateful that there is light at the end of the tunnel. As I write, already 13% of the United States is vaccinated. From the ominous gloom last year when even Easter seemed to be cancelled, even at Saint Peter in Rome, it seems this year we will return to Easter and Holy Week like people coming out of a cave into the light. On the other hand, if you lost a loved one in this strange year, we Christians have the relief and joy of knowing that Jesus promised at the Mystical Supper, "I go ahead of you to prepare a place for you." And, "My Father's house has many mansions." If Jesus came for one of your loved ones this year, our sorrow is separation, but our hope is in reunion.

Having started a spiritual journey with gratitude, and there is no reason for any journey without hope, during Lent we take time to look at the dark side of life, that is, sin. We focus for a little while on sin and repentance. I used to preach a series of lenten sermons called "Sin 101". The idea was that it sounds like a course from first year in college. By the time we get to college we have 18 years of practical experience with sin, but then, in college, we take our first adult course on the theory of sin, so to speak, sin in the abstract. We learn a whole catalogue of sins as children and adolescents, but the point of Sin 101 is that all sins have certain elements in common. These elements are the foundation of sin. All of the different sins are built like different houses and buildings on the same foundation. In

my opinion, every sin always contains the sin of pride, and every sin always contains a lie, and every sin always contains separation or division. The first two elements are causes of sin, but the third element, separation, is the most frightening, because it means sin is always the enemy of love.

In the story of the first sin in Genesis, we read about the creation of "the man" Adam. The name in Hebrew of Adam is almost the same as the Hebrew word for earth. The pun was not lost on the first listeners to these scriptures for whom that Hebrew was their mother tongue. After the sin, when God pronounces sentence, and He says, "Thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return," the Hebrew listeners would have heard the parallel to Adam's name. Although Adam is himself earth, his sin has introduced a separation or a division between Adam and his natural relationship with his source. God explains this separation in the full pronouncement, "Cursed is the earth because of you. Through pain and toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the earth, for dust you are and to dust you will return." The consequence of the first sin was separation from God, separation between the man and the woman, separation between the woman and the serpent, and, most ontologically, separation between Adam and earth. Every sin since then amplifies our separation from God, from each other, and from the rest of creation. Some sin is short division, some sin is long division, but sin is always division.

Another element of every sin is falsehood or a lie. Of course, not everything that is false is a lie. To be a lie, the falsehood must be intentional. Anytime we commit an intentional sin, we must first choose to believe a lie. When the serpent lied to Eve, she chose to believe the serpent instead of God. I've always thought the story is not very complimentary to Adam. He comes across as a bit of a blockhead who didn't really think about things.

Some westerners are taken aback in our church when they hear us apologize for sins, both intentional and unintentional. Westerners say, "If it's unintentional, how can it be a sin?" As Msgr. Alexis Mihalik told us, "If you bump into someone accidentally, you still apologize." Trying to sort out all the psychology that separates intentional sin from unintentional sin is labyrinthine, in my opinion. As some people say, it's going down the rabbit hole. I'm happy that in the East we don't have to sort these things out. We just apologize for all of our sins, intentional and unintentional. There was a funeral a few years ago for a young woman who died of a drug over-

dose after years of struggle. Some judgmental people would have denied her a funeral, calling it an act of free will that separated her from God. The priest at that funeral said, "Well she repented in her soul, but her body was still addicted." What a great comfort that was to her family! Who among us can sort out the complex relation between our highest desires and the urges caused by chemical reactions in our bodies? By apologizing to God for all of our sins, both intentional and unintentional, not only do we clean our slate with God, but we avoid the additional sins of judging. Saint Paul says in one place, "I don't care if I am judged by you or any human court. Indeed, I don't even judge myself." And in another place he says, "Who are you to judge someone else's servant?"

Nevertheless, every sin contains a lie, either a lie that we told ourselves or a lie that we heard from somewhere else. If a lie comes from outside of us, that is called temptation. Sometimes we make up our own lie for self justification, and that is called rationalization. In 1859, a priest in England wrote a pamphlet called *Self-Deceit* as part of a larger work called *Spiritual Conferences*. No doubt you have sung hymns written by this very same priest, Frederick Faber. The pamphlet has the disturbing effect of making almost any Christian uncomfortable. Father Faber was not a man who was attached to comfort. He was born into a clerical family in the Church of England in 1812 at the beginning of the Victorian era. As such, and with his high intelligence, he could have lived a life of uninterrupted comfort as a priest of the established church, but God had other plans for him, much like Saint Paul. While Father Faber was at Oxford, there were a number of idealistic and talented intellectuals who were questioning the established order, the Church of England, after intense study of the early Church and the Church fathers in the original languages. The most famous of these intellectuals was John Henry Newman, recently canonized by Pope Francis. Saint John Henry Newman said, "To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant." Father Faber came from a very Calvinistic family, and was himself a convicted Calvinist. As he learned more and more about the history of the Church and the vast writings of the early Christians, he was forced to admit that many of his beliefs and even prejudices were in error. Eventually, he left his secure position with the established Church of England, and became a Catholic priest at a time when laws against Catholics were still recent. Only in 1829, when Faber was already 17, was a law passed allowing a Catholic to sit in Parliament. Not long before, a Catholic was not allowed to vote, to serve in the military, or to own most property. So Father Faber gave up every comfort and security when he gave up his position in the established

church to follow his conscience. Two of the hymns written by him that you have probably heard or sung are *Faith of our Fathers* and *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*.

Father Faber's writings on self-deceit were published as a separate pamphlet by a Quaker publisher in Pennsylvania in 1949. Many of my own ancestors were Quakers. It was primarily the Quakers who incited the anti-slavery movement in the United States. They found themselves in a quandary in the Civil War, since they had largely caused the war and believed in the cause of abolition, but at the same time they were dedicated to non-violence. As a result, their young men took the most dangerous positions of flag bearer and drummer in the Union Army, positions that were unarmed but at the front line. Although these brave young abolitionists will never be canonized by the Catholic Church, I am certain they are among the martyrs we read about in the Book of the Apocalypse. The pamphlet *Self-Deceit* comes with a warning. It doesn't say, "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here." On the contrary, it offers divine hope and a path to spiritual advancement. But the warning could read, "Abandon self-satisfaction," or "Abandon self-righteousness". When we strip away our self-deceit, we find ourselves naked. At the same time, however, we see what God sees in us.

According to Father Faber, our self-deceit has four causes which he calls *fountains*. *Fountain* is a very apt word because it depicts a constant flow of deceit. It seems like many people are always looking for *the* cause of their problems, and if they can find that one cause, perhaps some childhood incident or experience, then their problems will be over. But, by calling the causes of self-deceit *fountains*, Father Faber shocks us into realizing that they flow constantly throughout our lives, and only prayer, virtue, and diligence throughout our lives can keep us from being soaked.

He says the four fountains are, first, the lack of reliable self knowledge; second, the self's power to deceive self; third, the self letting itself be deceived by others; and, fourth, the self deceived by Satan. I think he puts these rather gently. Instead of "the self's power to deceive self", he could have said, "lies we tell ourselves". But that really hurts, ouch! The subject is already so disconcerting, he probably decided it would get a more open reception with a little diplomacy.

As to the first fountain, the lack of reliable self-knowledge, I can't write too much in a short column. After all, it is different for each of us, that's why it is called self-knowledge. It is also a task of a lifetime to learn who we are, and at every stage of life we have a different capacity to know and understand

human nature. I remember an amusing scene in an old Perry Mason novel. During the opening interviews, there was a young lady attending college who lectured Mr. Mason and everyone else in the room about “repressed feelings.” She had studied psychology in the 1930’s and knew all the answers. All problems could be explained by “repressed feelings.” Dramatically, it was a little bit of comic relief. Later on, an older woman left the room, but on her way out she stopped next to the young college student and said, “My dear, what on earth would you know about repressed feelings?”

of the most painful criticism comes from people who have malicious intentions, but it is true! Once, in one of our parishes, there was a phone call to the office one day, and the parish matriarch answered the phone. The pastor heard the conversation from the next room and it seems that a parishioner was very angry claiming that the pastor was talking about her personally during his Sunday sermon. The woman in the office spent a long time saying gently, “Father was preaching to everyone. I’m sure he wasn’t talking about you personally.” After a long argument, the parish matriarch finally said forcefully, “Well if the shoe fits, wear it!”, and



Self-knowledge comes from many sources. There is a popular belief that we learn from our mistakes, or at least, we can learn from our mistakes if we are humble. On the other hand, a very successful producer of movies, one of the most successful in history, said the opposite. He said, “You should learn from your successes. The only thing you learn from your failures is how to be a failure.” In my own experience, some of the best self-knowledge comes from what other people tell me. Other people can see what I’m doing wrong, even though I can’t see it myself. Listening to what other people say about us can be both painful and discouraging, and we have to sort out from all the criticism what they are saying because of their own agenda from what they are saying that is true. In my experience though, when someone tells me the truth about myself, I know the moment that I hear it that it is true, and I wonder how I could have been unaware for so long. Notice I said, “what they are saying is true”, but I did not say “what they are saying is well-intentioned.” Some

hung up the phone. The parishioner took the sermon personally because it was true. Isn’t it interesting how often stories about someone acquiring self-knowledge are quite funny? I think it is because most of us can’t see ourselves, but everyone around us sees us quite clearly.

As I said above, we can learn a lot from our critics, and, in a later passage, Father Faber talks about people who spend their lives criticizing others. These are not people who have much self-knowledge themselves, and he describes how their constant judging and criticizing is a form of self-deception, but he points out that people like this get quite good at what they do, and so their criticisms can be painfully accurate, even though they are spoken with malice. With some desire for virtue and a good laugh, we can learn from their barbs.

Before moving on to the other fountains, it’s worth mentioning that Father Faber talks about the danger of obses-

sion with self-knowledge. He advises that the road to spiritual growth includes much more prayer (spending time with God) and virtuous action than it does with constant self-inspection. In some ways, this little pamphlet is way ahead of its time, talking about unpeeling the layers of self-deception long before the self-help books and recovery programs of the twentieth century, but he also foresees that obsession with self is like falling into a bottomless pit.

The second fountain of the self-deceit is the self deceiving the self. That is a diplomatic way of saying, the lies we tell ourselves. These are the lies of self-justification and rationalization, the lies we tell ourselves before we sin and the lies we tell ourselves after we sin. It is easier to see this sort of self-deceit because we have an objective standard that tells us what sin is. We know what a sin is. Nevertheless, we tell ourselves a lie before a sin to give ourselves permission, so to speak. For example, we tell ourselves that listening to gossip is being informed and repeating gossip is serving the greater good. Another lie we tell ourselves before a sin is called *entitlement* nowadays. I heard of a therapist who ran a group for people with severe behavioral problems. After a relapse, he always interrogated the person relentlessly, “at what point did you decide you were entitled to indulge yourself?” Of course these were people who wanted to get well, so they cooperated in his interrogations. The lies we tell ourselves before a sin give us permission to violate God’s law, but then we tell ourselves lies afterwards to cover up our guilt, just as Adam and Eve put on leaves and hid in the bushes from God. The lies we tell ourselves afterwards are for self-justification and we call them *rationalization*.

The third fountain of self-deceit, according to Father Faber, is “the self letting itself be deceived by other things or persons, by things or persons external to itself.” There is so much to be gained by listening to the observations of others, it can be tricky business sorting out the wisdom of others from their dishonest praise or cuts. Very often their observations, which are untrue, are nevertheless well-intentioned. Who hasn’t told a “white lie” to make someone else feel better? It seems that all self-deception is funny when exposed to the light, and if we forget about its serious consequences. Some of Father Faber’s most humorous writing is in this section as he describes our eagerness for the praise of others: “Who ever saw anyone who was not? The gravest, sleekest, most pompous men, smooth themselves down and unbend themselves in glossy patronizing benevolence under the siren breath of praise, like the swell of a summer sea when the gentle south wind blows. Cold men thaw with an amusing reluctant eagerness under the same operation, and dignity descends even to playfulness under the irresistible attractions of praise. Silent men, however, are the grand lovers of praise. They are ruminating creatures; self is the cud they chew, and, strange to say, they do not find it bitter. Like thirsty camels in the desert who suck up the

muddiest water with relish, so we with praise are almost regardless of its quality.” Self-deception is amusing indeed, were it not for its deadly spiritual consequences. Laughing at each other is something we see monkeys doing in the monkey houses. Father Faber comments, “After all, we are monkeys, and we only grow into men by knowing that we are not men yet.”

The fourth fountain of self deception, according to Father Faber, is the self deceived by Satan. As a general rule, we have been quite successful at deceiving ourselves since the original sin with no supernatural help. Saint Teresa of Avila said, “I am more afraid of people who are terrified of the devil than I am of the devil himself.” She knew that once we belong to Jesus, the devil has no power over us. Nevertheless, his lies are everywhere. Although many good things have happened in our country in the past fifty or sixty years, it also seems like all the moral failings are because our formerly Christian country embraced lies of the devil, lies that should be obviously false to anyone. I well remember as a child as the evening news glamorized every new rebellion, including drug abuse, and my classmates repeating everything they heard the next day at school. So many of those boys were dead ten or twenty years later from drug overdoses. And still the entertainment industry glamorized drug abuse and the stand-up comedians laughed about it. In the early 1980’s, the first lady called them out when she said, “It’s not funny anymore, young people are dying.” The response of the entertainment industry was to mock her, but they had been called out.

After telling us that drug abuse is good and sexual boundaries are bad, the Father of Lies has moved on to abolishing the fifth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill.” Enlightened people nowadays believe that happiness and prosperity will come for everyone if we kill our children, kill our old people, and kill our sick people. If a woman conceives twins, it is now standard medical practice to tell the mother she should kill one of her twins so the other one can be healthier. Our new Catholic president immediately reversed the “Mexico City policy” after his inauguration. He never deceived anyone there—he promised to do so during the election. Now your tax money will be used around the globe to promote sacrificing infants to the false gods of wealth, prosperity, and individualism. Here in the United States, the government is taking an active role in castrating boys, both chemically and with surgery, based on their feelings—feelings that have been manipulated. There are instances of minors asking to be mutilated by a physician, and child protective services takes them away from their parents to have the minors surgically modified. During the twentieth century, our government sterilized enormous numbers of people, especially men, as part of the eugenics movement. The Nazis actually complained in the 1930’s that the Americans were ahead of them! Now our government is castrating minors, not grown men, based on the advise

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PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

AT THE CARPATHIAN VILLAGE...

New Work Truck & Plow

In early January, the engine of the venerable 1984 GMC work truck at the Carpathian Village in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania finally gave up the ghost. With the financial support of the faithful of the eparchy in the annual Bishop's Appeal, Bishop Kurt was able to approve the purchase of a new work truck and plow. The 2020 Ford F250 was purchased with the help of Sales Manager Jeff Nesler of Feussner's Ford in Freeland, PA. Jeff, a member of Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Freeland, where Father Scott Boghossian is pastor, worked hard to make the new vehicle affordable for us. The truck was received three days before a nor'easter dumped 24 inches of snow at the Carpathian Village. The truck has already put on 200 miles worth of plowing and is a much-needed tool to keep the roads at the Carpathian Village opened, especially for EMS and fire response. May God bless all of you most generously! Father Michael Salnick is Director of the Carpathian Village.



DIRECTIVES FOR THE GREAT FAST

From the Office of the Bishop



FASTING REGULATIONS

- +All who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passaic are required to abstain from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast.
- +All adults who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passaic are required to abstain from meat, eggs, and milk products on the first day of Lent, Monday, February 15, and on Great and Holy Friday, April 2.
- +These are the minimum requirements; however, our Tradition is to abstain from meat after Meatfare Sunday and from dairy products after Cheesefare Sunday.

Dispensation

- +Pastors and Administrators may, for a just cause, grant to the individual faithful and to individual families, dispensations or commutations of the fasting rules into other pious practices.

LITURGICAL DIRECTIVES

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

- +All Pastors and Administrators are encouraged to celebrate the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast.
- +A liturgical service at which Holy Communion is distributed may be celebrated on the other weekdays of the Great Fast.

We ask you to pray for peace throughout the world, and for the victims of war. Please pray for those suffering from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and other diseases, as well as the health care professionals, family members, and others who are caring for them. Please remember also in your prayers all those in the military who are serving our country throughout the world.



CARPATHO-RUSYN SOCIETY

MANIFESTING CARPATHO-RUSYN CULTURE AND HISTORY

"Who are the Rusyns?" is a DVD presented by John Righetti, President emeritus of C-RS. It was released in 2019 for the 25th Anniversary of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society. This professional presentation clarifies the confusion and complicated

history of the Rusyns and how they almost became extinct. Not only will it be watched more than once, it is great to share with family and friends. The DVD can be ordered by making a check payable to: Carpatho-Rusyn Society for \$25, which includes postage and handling. Please mail with name of recipient(s) to Bonnie Burke, 1101 Tanner Crossing Lane, Indian Land, SC 29707. Orders will be processed immediately upon receipt. The information can also be found on www.c-rs.org at the bottom of the homepage. Visit Carpatho-Rusyn Society YouTube for our most recent educational videos.

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The Light of Christ Enlightens Everyone

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of gender counselors. There is a great danger in spending our time judging other people, instead of repenting from our own sins. However, as a shepherd, I cannot pass by these lies from the Father of Lies that have taken over our public policy. I have to warn my people, the ten commandments are still God's law. "Thou shalt not kill," is still the fifth commandment. Happiness, prosperity, and self-esteem do not flow from sacrificing infants to false gods, nor from suicide, nor from mutilation, nor from killing sick people or old people, no matter what we call it. Saint Paul says clearly, "Do you not know that you yourselves

are God's temple, and that God's Spirit lives in you? If any man destroys God's temple, God will destroy him."

Well, as I said at the beginning, there is nothing comfortable about facing self-deceit. Self-deception is there to make us comfortable with what is wrong, whether it's our lack of knowledge, our self-deceit, our acceptance of deceit from others, or even the deception of Satan, all self-deceit keeps us comfortable with evil.

If Father Faber could talk to us today, having gone on to the next life, he might say this: "Self-deceit separates us from God. Get rid of it, if you can. Take a look in the mirror from time to time. But please don't spend too much time looking in the mirror. Self-absorp-

tion also separates us from God." In his writings, Father Faber recommends simple piety more than too much self-examination. Prayer (talking with God) and good works are the everyday road to spiritual growth.

After looking at the gloomy, sometimes frightening, but sometimes hilarious subject of self-deceit, how comforting it is at our Lenten Liturgy, the Liturgy of Saint Gregory, also called the Liturgy of the Presanctified, when the priest dramatically comes through the Royal Doors with the lighted candle and the burning incense, and he solemnly blesses all of us, and he cries out, "The Light of Christ enlightens everyone who comes into the world!" We know that it is the light of Christ, not our own self-knowledge, that dispels

the darkness. God's truth is more powerful than the lies of the world. When prophesying about the Messiah, Isaiah says, "the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see", and he also says, "The eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped". It is Jesus Himself who takes the bandages off of our wounds so that they can be examined, and it is Jesus Himself who pours oil and wine on our wounds, and it is Jesus Himself who leaves us at an inn, which is the Church, and who tells the innkeeper, "If there is any more debt owed, I will pay it when I come back."

+Kurt Bunette

BASILIAN SISTER M. REGINA ADAMS ENTERS INTO THE FULLNESS OF LIFE

Sister M. Regina (Claire Marie) Adams, OSBM, took the final steps of her journey into eternal life in the late evening of February 3, 2021. Entering the hospital with some health problems, she fully expected to return to her mission at Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Wilkes-Barre, PA. The Lord, whom she served so faithfully, however, had other plans for her and took her swiftly to Himself from there.

Sister Regina was born in Trenton, NJ, the daughter of the late Michael and Anna (Anchak) Adams. She entered the community from Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Trenton, NJ, on February 4, 1957, and made her Final Profession of Vows on August 26, 1962.

For about half of her religious life, Sister Regina spent her energies in teaching, and she was able to convey her love of this ministry whether her students were in the primary grades or the upper ones. Her abilities came into play as she also managed the duties of principal when necessary. Sister Regina's zeal for learning was matched by her enthusiasm for science, evidenced by her interest in the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science. Here, her students always placed favorably in these competitions.

Sister's talent for music served her well in her later years of parish ministry when she was often called upon to cantor for the Divine Services. She had a strong voice and one that was easy to follow. Not surprisingly, sports also had a prominent place among Sister Regina's interests. Anything connected with Notre Dame or the Steelers had a special place in her heart.

After the schools where the Sisters served were closed, Sister Regina's energies then turned to parish ministry for the remainder of her life. Chief among the duties of this ministry was visiting the sick of the parishes. Her lively nature lent itself to bringing cheer to those who were homebound,

in hospitals or in nursing homes. This ministry, to which she devoted herself with great dedication, was to be her last. From there it was just another step into eternity.

Pilgrims will remember Sister Regina's familiar face at the holupki stand where she was always ready to greet them with joy and with a smile. In the community, Sister will be missed for her sense of humor and her infectious laughter. A friend of hers characterized this laughter as mimicking a tommy gun; thus giving her the nickname, "Tommy." She herself wanted to be remembered for her deep sense of faith and trust in God. No doubt, it was this she called upon as she surrendered her life into the hands of God.

Sister Regina was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, Michael. She was the last surviving member of her immediate family. In addition to the members of her community, she is survived by her two devoted nieces, Linda Marfino and Regina Garb, and their families.

Due to the coronavirus restrictions, there was no public viewing. Father Jerome Botsko, Monastery Chaplain celebrated the Funeral Divine Liturgy on Tuesday, February 9, 2021. Previous to Sister Regina's funeral at Mount Saint Macrina, a wake and Parastas Service was held at Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Wilkes-Barre, PA. Sister had served in parish ministry there and at surrounding parishes for fifteen years. Sister Ruth, Provincial, and all the Sisters are grateful to Father Michael Kerestes, pastor of Saint Mary Parish in Wilkes-Barre, and the John Morris Funeral Home for their help in making all the necessary arrangements. Eternal memory! *Vičnaja jej pamjat'!*



BYZANTINE CATHOLIC OUTREACH THE VILLAGES, FL

Address: 625 W. Lady Lake Blvd.

Lady Lake, FL 32159 (at St. Alban's)

Intersection of CR466
and Rolling Acres Rd., near the
American Legion



Schedule: (note due to Covid Virus, Divine Liturgy every two weeks)

February: Sundays, 2:00 P.M., Feb. 7, Feb. 14,
Pre-sanctified: Wed Feb. 17, 12:00 P.M.

March: Sundays 2:00 P.M., Mar. 7, Mar. 28 (Palm Sun.)
Pre-sanctified: Wed. Mar. 17, 12:00 P.M.

April: 2, 1:30 P.M. Good Friday Vespers, Procession
3: 3:00 P.M. Saturday: Resurrection Procession, Matins, Divine Liturgy,
Blessing of Food

In-Person and LIVE at Facebook:
Byzantine Catholic Mission The Villages FL

Local Contact: call or text: 352-530-9631

MOTHER AND STEPFATHER OF FATHER ED CIMBALA DIE FIFTY DAYS APART

Kenneth C. Terryberry died on November 14, 2020, from complications resulting from his struggle of several years with Alzheimer's disease. After a short period of mourning, Betty Lee Terryberry, his wife of 33 years, died on January 3, 2021, from complications caused by a stroke.

Ken was born June 17, 1935, to Robert and Lena Terryberry and spent the first seventeen years of his life in the Seneca Finger Lakes area in upstate New York. At seventeen, he joined the United States Navy and remained on active duty for 25 years, retiring in 1977 as a Chief Warrant Officer 4. During his naval career, he served on eight ships. He kept engine rooms on destroyers running, although he would joke about "only being a plumber." He also spent three years in Texas as a Navy Recruiter and one year in Vietnam, during which he earned his highest military award, the Bronze Star w/Combat. Ken worked for thirteen years at Transamerica Delaval as service manager. Ken became a widower with the death of his wife, Suzanne.

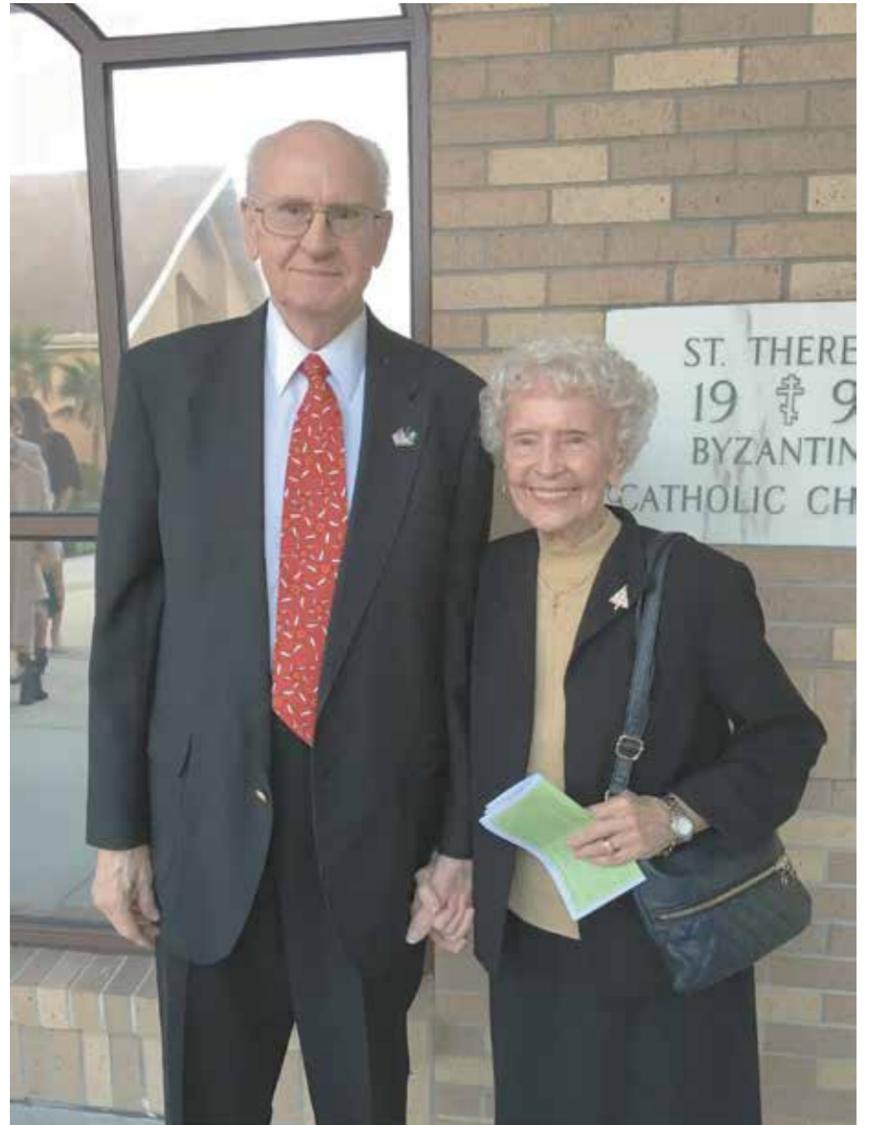
While working at Delaval, Ken met Betty Lee Cimbala, who was an executive secretary there. Betty was born on November 18, 1929, to Edward J. Wildblood, Sr., and Viola Lee Wildblood in Trenton, NJ. A graduate of Trenton High School, after the Second World War, she began working at the New Jersey State Highway Department, where she met Army veteran, Peter Cimbala.

They married in 1949 and she joined Pete as an active member of Saint Mary of the Assumption Byzantine Catholic Church in Trenton, NJ. Before marrying Peter, Betty was preparing to be a Presbyterian missionary, but after being introduced to the Byzantine Catholic Church, she enthusiastically embraced her newfound faith. Peter died on December 31, 1966.

Ken and Betty married in 1987 and spent a few years in Trenton, NJ, where they were parishioners of Saint Mary of the Assumption. While dating Betty, Ken converted to the Byzantine Catholic faith and lived it with great fervor. During this time, they volunteered for their parish; Meals on Wheels; along with other community organizations. They spent a couple of weeks during summers working with the late Father Paul Tigyer at the Carpathian Village.

They soon embarked on three decades of an extraordinary retirement in Bradenton, Florida, where they were parishioners of Saint Therese Byzantine Catholic Church in St. Petersburg, driving every week sixty miles round trip to attend the Divine Liturgy. Many weeks they made the trip several additional times for holy days and to volunteer at bingo.

In retirement, Ken and Betty traveled throughout the world, while remaining active in their church and their community. They both took great joy

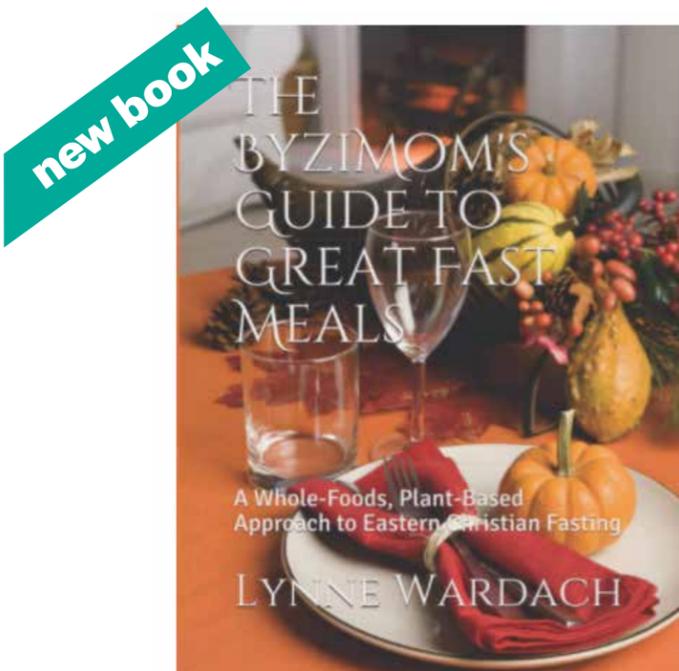


in meeting people and forming lasting friendships. They were active in many organizations, including the Knights of Columbus and a variety of community and fraternal groups. They especially enjoyed volunteering at the Shriners Hospital for Children in Tampa.

Ken and Betty are survived by Ken's daughter Joy Hiller (Donald), his son-in-law Curtis Higgs, and Betty's two sons, Dr. Paul A. Cimbala (Dr. Elizabeth C. Vozzola) and Father Edward

G. Cimbala, D. Min., the pastor of Saint Mary and Holy Cross Byzantine Catholic Churches in Manhattan. They also are survived by numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Ken and Betty were predeceased by Ken's daughter Nina Higgs, Betty's son, Peter Cimbala, and Betty's daughter, GERALD LEE CIMBALA.



The ByziMom's Guide to Great Fast Meals

A Whole-Food, Plant-Based Approach to Eastern Christian Fasting

Have you ever wished for a little support as you attempt to keep the Eastern Christian fast? Healthy and delicious ideas and family-approved recipes for every meal of the day!

Breakfasts: Smoothies, oil-free granola, pancakes, puddings, casseroles fit for potlucks, and coffee hours too!

Kid-friendly Lunches: Lynne's family has listed their favorites, including Macaroni and Cheese, lenten style, without dairy, but not without taste! Even the homeschool co-op kids couldn't tell the difference!

Dinner Entrees: Over 50 different delicious recipes and adaptations for your some of your favorite dishes like Lentil Loaf, Enchiladas, Curries, Holupki, Sauerbraten, Stuffed Shells, and more!

Even baked goods, for that special occasion!: A few simple substitutions will allow you to transform your favorite recipes into ones for the fast!

Search for it on Amazon.com

Soar As On Eagle's Wings

Though youths grow weary and tired,
And vigorous young men stumble badly,
Yet those who wait for the LORD
Will gain new strength;
They will mount up with wings like eagles,
They will run and not get tired,
They will walk and not become weary.

ISAIAH 40

**BYZAN-TEEN YOUTH RALLY
JULY 1ST - 4TH 2021
MOUNT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
16300 Old Emmitsburg Road | Emmitsburg, MD 21727**

**Keynote Address by Superbowl Champion Matt Birk
Closing Hierarchical Liturgy at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Basilica**

Note: Those teens who were 18 last year and planned to attend the cancelled 2020 San Diego Rally will be allowed to attend the Rally in 2021. Guidelines will be provided for these attendees in a future email.



FREE COURSE ON “THE MYSTERY OF ICONS” HOSTED BY THE ECF OFFICE OF THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC

Mystery of Icons: Introduction into the Theology and Spirituality of the Icon in the Byzantine Tradition (February 22 - March 6, 3:00 - 4:45 PM EST)

A short, but intensive course on the history, theology and spirituality of icons. We will trace the development of Eastern Christian iconographic tradition through its main stages, look at its most remarkable phenomena, and try to understand theological and spiritual appeal of icons through the ages.

The course consists of 10 lectures (which you can attend live or view recorded on Youtube at your convenience).

Course description

This course will offer you a comprehensive introduction into one of the most remarkable phenomena of the Eastern Christian tradition, iconography. Icons are an important part of every Byzantine liturgy, spirituality and theology. Hence, in this course we will approach iconography from several mutually complementary angles. We will:

- briefly survey the history of the development of the Byzantine iconographic tradition;
- ponder theological and spiritual significance of icons;
- examine main types of icons of Christ, Mother of God, Holy Trinity and every major liturgical feasts.

Naturally, the course will be predominantly component, as all lectures are based on PowerPoint presentations with numerous icons, frescoes, mosaics and architectural monuments of every Byzantine and

Ukrainian Church. Also the students will be invited to do some readings of Biblical, patristic and liturgical texts, as well as small portions of modern scholarly literature (optional).

Course duration: 10 meetings of 1 – 1,5 hour each.

Course duration

2 weeks (February 22 - March 6, 3:00 - 4:45 PM EST), 5 online Zoom-meetings (2 hours each covering two lectures/topics), available also for later viewing on YouTube. Schedule of meetings (small changes may apply):

February 22 - Lectures 1 & 2

February 24 - Lectures 3 & 4

February 27 - Lectures 5 & 6

March 3 - Lectures 7 & 8

March 6 - Lectures 9 & 10

Those who wish to obtain academic credits for this course should contact the instructor in order to discuss formal requirements and arrange for some additional course work (required reading, written assignments, and final paper). The maximum of 2 academic credits can be received for this course from the Ukrainian Catholic University (recognized and accepted at most of the US universities and colleges).

Instructor

Taras Tymo is a theology professor at the Ukrainian Catholic University (Lviv, Ukraine) specializing in Eastern Christian theology, Church Fathers and iconography. He received his theological training from Ukrainian Catholic University (1999), Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium, 2001) and University of Notre Dame (USA, 2006). Since his student years he is interested in the theology of the icon, and since 2006 is involved with the School of Ukrainian Iconography at the Ukrainian Catholic University. He has taught various courses on the theology, history and spirituality of icons in Ukraine and internationally since 2010.

To learn more about this free course hosted by the ECF Office of Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic and how to join it either live or watch its recordings please visit:

https://sites.google.com/view/mysteryoficons-coursesite/home?fbclid=IwAR36zRYuBhrxnykpgxOquTCkCV9QaZLYOI5r9pqB_tfRvOxHQIW9EU-WaqLw

Please share this information with anyone who might be interested to join this course!

When traveling to the Mid-Atlantic, please visit our churches

Maryland— Patronage of the Mother of God

1265 Linden Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21227
Phone 410-247-4936
Web www.patronagechurch.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:15 am

Patronage at Abingdon meeting at: Stone Chapel at Saint Francis de Sales Church

1450 Abingdon Road
Abingdon, MD 21009
Sunday Divine Liturgy 5:30 pm

Patronage at Hagerstown meeting at: Saint Ann Catholic Church

1525 Oak Hill Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21742
Saturday Vigil Liturgy 6:45 pm 2 per month
Call Baltimore for schedule

Saint Gregory of Nyssa

12420 Old Gunpowder Road Spur
Beltsville, MD 20705
Phone 301-953-9323
Web www.stgregoryofnyssa.net
Sunday Divine Liturgies
Church Slavonic 8:00 am
Sunday Matins 9:30 am
English Liturgy 10:30 am

Epiphany Mission

9301 Warfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD
Web www.eolmission.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

Virginia— Epiphany of our Lord

3410 Woodburn Road
Annandale, VA 22003
Phone: 703-573-3986
Web www.eolbcc.org
Sunday Divine Liturgies 8:00 am & 10:30 am

Ascension of our Lord

114 Palace Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Phone 757-585-2878 (rectory)
Web www.ascensionva.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 11:00 am

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

216 Parliament Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23462
Phone 757-456-0809
Web www.olphvb.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 8:00 am

North Carolina— Saints Cyril and Methodius

2510 Piney Plains Road
Cary, NC 27518

Phone 919-239-4877
Web www.sscyrilmethodius.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

District of Columbia— Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel Basilica of the National Shrine

400 Michigan Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20017
Phone 202-526-8300
Web www.nationalshrine.org
No regularly scheduled Sunday Liturgy.

To reserve a date and time, priests must call the Liturgy Office and submit a current letter from their eparchy's Safe Environment Office.

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS LECTURE

Sponsored by the Byzantine Catholic Seminary to be delivered in person and through livestreaming on May 18

Deacon Daniel Galadza will deliver, both in person and through livestreaming, the Twenty-first annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Lecture of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary entitled, "*The Liturgy of Jerusalem: History, Theology, and Lessons for Today.*"

The Church of Jerusalem was the cradle of Christianity, influencing when and how Christendom celebrated the conception, birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ and the memorials of the Theotokos, apostles, and martyrs. For the Byzantine Catholic Seminary's annual Cyril and Methodius Lecture, Deacon Daniel Galadza presents Jerusalem's liturgical year, its historical sources, and theology. His lecture will illustrate connections between the "Byzantinization" of the Eastern Patriarchates at the end of the first millennium and the Latinization of the Eastern Catholic Churches from the middle of the second millennium onward.

Deacon Daniel Galadza completed studies at the University of Toronto and the Sheptytsky Institute before defending his doctorate in Byzantine Liturgy at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome in 2013. He has been a junior fellow at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, D.C., assistant professor at the University of Vienna, visiting professor at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, and is currently a research fellow at the Centre of Advanced Studies of the University of Regensburg, Germany. In February of 2018, Oxford University Press published his *Liturgy and Byzantinization in Jerusalem*: the first study dedicated to the question of the Byzantinization of Jerusalem's liturgy, providing English

translations of many liturgical texts and hymns for the first time.

The public is welcome to register for and attend this lecture on Tuesday, May 18, at 7:00 PM at the Cathedral Center of Saint John the Baptist in Munhall, PA, where all state-mandated social distancing protocols, including masking, will be strictly observed. For all others, the lecture will be livestreamed via our website (www.bcs.edu) and recorded for future access by the public on our YouTube archive. The Seminary website also has further information for registration which is required for in-person attendees.

The annual lecture series is sponsored by the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh, PA, a community of mentors,



teachers, and students forming leaders for the Church in an environment of Christian unity, integrity, and missionary spirit, with a commitment to ecumenism.

Founded in 1950, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary is a free-standing, English-speaking theological seminary, welcoming all those seeking the knowledge possessed by the Eastern ecclesial

traditions. The seminary is authorized to grant the Master of Arts in Theology and Master of Divinity degrees by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools.



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

February 22, 2021

Dear friends,

I pray that you and your family are safe, and I pray that you are experiencing a grace filled Great Lent and we will celebrate the Easter in a beautiful manner together this year.

Since Bishop Milan Sasik died unexpectedly, our mother church in Uzhorod has been experiencing severe financial distress. Even worse, many priests with families are not being paid any salary. In the poor mountain parishes, their entire salary was stipends that Bishop Sasik solicited from donors in the wealthier countries of western Europe. I very much would like to help these priests through this difficult time and difficult winter. I believe that stipends for Divine Liturgies have many good points. Here are some key points:

- 1) A stipend for a Divine Liturgy goes directly to the priest. No one is allowed to take a fee or percentage from the stipend by Church law.
- 2) The Eparchy of Passaic will pay the administrative costs, so that 100% goes to a priest and his family who need the help.
- 3) Your name will not be sent with the stipend. Only the nature of the request and initials of the person to be prayed for.
- 4) People in need are happier if they can do something in return for their assistance.
- 5) Prayers for the dead are an ancient and laudable custom.
- 6) Prayers for a sinner will not be wasted. God hears them and answers them at the best time.
- 7) In other European countries, the government pays the priests. Not in our mother eparchy.
- 8) NB Stipends are not tax deductible. You will receive a thank you, but not a "tax letter".

If you choose to participate, God will bless you doubly, for the prayers and also for helping those in need. I commend you to the care of the all holy Mother of God.

Your servant,

+ Kurt

Most Rev. Kurt Burnette
Bishop of Passaic



445 Lackawanna Avenue • Woodland Park, NJ 07424-2969 • (973) 890-7777 • FAX (973) 890-7175

NEW BYZANTINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FORMING IN GREATER CHARLOTTE, NC, AREA

Divine Liturgies at the Byzantine Catholic Mission of Fort Mill, SC for the month of December will be broadcast online. Please contact Ron Somich by email at ron.somich@gmail.com for the link and dial in information. <https://carolinabyzantine.com/>

March:
6, 13, 20, 27

CANTOR EMERITUS, PROFESSOR PAUL DZURISIN, ENTERS INTO ETERNAL LIFE

Professor Paul Peter Dzurisin, 90, a resident of Swoyersville, PA, and retired cantor of Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church there, fell asleep in the Lord on Friday afternoon, Dec. 4, 2020, at Partridge-Tippett Nursing Facility of the Wesley Village Campus, Jenkins Twp., PA, where he had been a guest since May.

His loving wife is Dorothy Boback Dzurisin. Together, Paul and Dorothy celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary on Aug. 16.

Born July 3, 1930, in Pittston, PA, Paul was one of eight children born to the late George and Mary Kisling Dzurisin. Raised in Duryea, PA, Paul was a graduate of the former Duryea High School, class of 1948.

A US Army veteran, Paul was drafted into active service during the Korean War. Over his two years of service, he served as medic at the Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, TX; Letterman Army Medical Center, San Francisco, CA; and the 5th General Army Hospital, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, where he served for one year.

Following his honorable discharge from military service, Paul began his career as a nursing assistant at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Lyons, NJ, and eventually transferred to the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Plains Twp., PA, where he worked as a nursing assistant for 30 years, retiring from there in 1987.

Coming from a family of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, Paul was called by the Lord to serve as a cantor in the Byzantine Catholic Church, studying at the former Holy Dormition Byzantine Franciscan Friary, Sybertsville, PA. Paul began his service as a cantor alongside his brother, John, at Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church, Swoyersville, where he was a member for over 60 years and served as the lead cantor for the past 47 years. He also served as cantor for some years at Saint Michael the Archangel Byzantine Catholic Church, Pittston, PA, his home parish. In his earlier years, he served as cantor at Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, Lopez, PA.

Paul was proud to serve his country and was a 60-plus year member of the American Legion, Andrew Lawrence Post 644, Swoyersville.

A man of strong faith, Paul faithfully served the Lord by sharing the God-given gift of his voice and lifting it to sing the praises of the Lord. Paul always said that in his life, the Lord came first, and his family came second. The love, care, and concern he had for his family was immeasurable, and he leaves behind a legacy that will live on in the hearts of his loved ones for generations to come. Paul will be remembered by all as a handsome, happy fellow who was never miserable, but always joyful. His genuine joy and zest for life was best exhibited through his love of singing and dancing.

In addition to his parents, George and Mary Dzurisin, Paul was preceded in death by his infant son, Paul Dzurisin, Jr.; his brothers, Monsignor George (Dzurisin) Durisin, Joseph Dzurisin, Michael Dzurisin, and John Dzurisin; his sisters, Sister M. Paula Dzurisin, O.S.B.M., Sister M. Philip Dzurisin, O.S.B.M., and Mary Wascavage.

In addition to his wife, Dorothy, Paul is survived by his two daughters, Dorothy Sagliocco and her husband, Joseph, Pittston; and Rita Yanchick and her



husband, Thomas, Swoyersville; his five grandchildren, Maria Blasko and her husband, Marc; Chrissy Yanchick; T.J. Yanchick and his wife, Lori; Lori Yanchick; and Lisa Yanchick; his four great-grandchildren, Jax and Alivia Yanchick; and Emma and Cole Galli; as well as his numerous nieces, nephews, fellow parishioners and friends.

Relatives and friends were respectfully invited to attend Paul's viewing which was held Tuesday, December 8, 2020, at Wroblewski Funeral Home Inc., 1442 Wyoming Ave., Forty Fort, PA. Parastas was celebrated privately the same day with Father Michael Popson, a vocation of Saint Nicholas Parish in Swoyersville, officiating. In keeping with federal and state guidelines, those attending the viewing were required to wear a facial covering and observe social distancing.

Funeral services for Paul were held privately Wednesday, December 9, 2020. Services began with Panachida followed by a concelebrated Office of Christian Burial with Divine Liturgy in Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Cemetery, Swoyersville. Father Andrii Dumnych, administrator, was the main celebrant and Father Michael Popson con-celebrated and served as homilist; his niece, Diana Dzurisin, served as cantor.

Although the services in church were private, the Divine Liturgy was live-streamed December 9, 2020, on the Saint Michael Parish, Pittston, Facebook page and Wroblewski Funeral Home, Inc., website, with access for all from both websites.

Interment with the Rite of Committal followed in Denison Cemetery, Swoyersville, where military honors were accorded by the United States Army.

For information or to send Mr. Dzurisin's family a message of condolence, you may visit the funeral home website at www.wroblewskifuneralhome.com, or Facebook page. Memorial contributions may be made in Paul's memory to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society by visiting www.nationalmssociety.org/Donate.

"Blessed is the way in which you go, O Soul, for a peaceful place has been prepared for you!" Blessed repose and eternal memory! Blažennyj pokoj! Vičnaja jemu pamjat'!

Divine Liturgy Request Form

Please use form below to list the name or initials of the person you would like Divine Liturgy offered for. You may also list the intention, such as illness, deceased, or their relationship to you, mother, son etc.

Divine Liturgy to be offered for	Intention (Optional)	Number of Liturgies	Stipend	Total Donation
			X \$15.00	

Total Enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to "Eparchy of Passaic". The full amount will be sent to a priest in Europe. Mail this sheet and your check to Eparchy of Passaic, 445 Lackawanna Ave, Woodland Park, NJ 07424. You will receive the same form in the mail soon, but you may use this one if you don't want to wait. NB Stipends are not tax deductible, but you will receive a "Thank You" acknowledgement.

Your Name: _____ Parish: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____



2020 Bishop's Appeal

www.eparchyofpassaic.com

Contributions Accepted Through June 2021

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC
2020 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Please pledge on line at eparchyofpassaic.com

or mail check payable to the Eparchy of Passaic
 in the envelope provided.

Payment schedules are available on line by
 EFT or Credit Card

***In this difficult year, please pledge only if you are able.
 Please take care of yourself,
 your family and your parish first.***

\$5,000.00 \$2,500.00 \$1,000.00 \$500.00

\$250.00 Other \$ _____

The 2020 Bishop's Appeal will run from October 1, 2020
 through December 31, 2020. Contributions will be accepted
 through the fiscal year ending June 2021.

 New Address or Correction

Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Parish: _____

When traveling to the South, please visit our churches

All Saints

10291 Bayshore Road
North Fort Myers, FL
33917
1-239-599-4023

Saint Anne

7120 Massachusetts Ave.
New Port Richey, FL 34653
1-727-849-1190

Epiphany of Our Lord

2030 Old Alabama Road
Roswell, GA 30076
1-770-993-0973

Saint Basil the Great

1475 N.E. 199th Street
Miami, FL 33179-5162
1-305-651-0991

Holy Dormition

17 Buckskin Lane
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
1-386-677-8704

Saints Cyril and Methodius

1002 Bahama Avenue
Fort Pierce, FL 34982
1-772-595-1021

Our Lady of the Sign

7311 Lyons Road
Coconut Creek, FL 33073
1-954-429-0056



Saint Nicholas of Myra

5135 Sand Lake Road
Orlando, FL 32819
1-407-351-0133

Saint Therese

4265 13th Avenue North
Saint Petersburg, FL 33713
1-727-323-4022

Byzantine Catholic Outreach:

The Villages, FL

Address: 625 W. Lady Lake Blvd.
Lady Lake, FL 32159 (at St. Alban's)
1-352-530-9631

ONLINE CHURCH SINGING CLASSES

OFFERED BY THE

METROPOLITAN CANTOR INSTITUTE

The Metropolitan Cantor Institute offers an online, 2-year program in church singing for both new and experienced cantors. Tuition is \$75 for each eight-week class, which includes feedback to help you improve your singing and cantorial skills. Initial classes on liturgy and church singing are free. For details: <https://mci.archpitt.org/classes> or call Deacon Jeffrey Mierzejewski at (412) 735-1676. Classes are offered at no charge to qualified students from any parish with no current cantor.



PRIESTLY REFLECTIONS

Father Paul Varchola West

FASTING IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

For better or worse, social media has come to play a very significant role in our society in a relatively short period of time. It certainly is a double-edged sword. While it does bring many beneficial things to society, it also leads to many, many temptations. There is one temptation in particular that perplexes me to no end: the idea of broadcasting our fasting to the entire world.

At the outset of the Great Fast mere weeks ago, I almost immediately noticed a rather intriguing phenomenon. Many people from many different Churches/jurisdictions/traditions were posting memes and commentaries about fasting and the start of the Fast, both in the East and in the West. Were these positive, prayerful posts? However much we would all hope they were, they were far from it! These posts were primarily rooted in how one tradition is superior to another because the fasting regulations are stricter, or how one is better than the other because the penitential season started earlier. I could go on, but I am pretty hopeful my point has been made.

I was really upset by this; I would say almost furious. All I could think about

was what Christ teaches about fasting in the Gospel of Matthew.

“And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” (Mt 6:16-18)

Our fasting is to be conducted in secret. We are to put on a spirit of joy and love. Nowhere does Christ say to rub your fasting in your fellow man's face for your own self-aggrandizement. I am sorry if this seems a little harsh, but it is true, nonetheless.

Fasting is not a competition. Fasting is an ancient practice meant to bring us closer to God, closer to His Christ, through a spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love to use the words of Saint Ephraim. As we pray in the *Lenten Triodion* as the Fast approaches:

“O my soul, if you are fasting from food but not purifying yourself of your pas-

sions, it is useless to be without food and to boast of it. For if you do not wish to correct yourself, you shall become a liar before God. You shall be like the evil spirits who never eat. Watch, therefore, that you do not waste your fast by sinning. Be insensitive to your foolish passions. Act as if you were standing before the crucified Savior, or even, be crucified with the One who was placed on the Cross for you. Call out to Him, saying: Remember me, O Lord, when You shall come into your kingdom.” (Aposticha at Matins, Wednesday of Cheesefare Week)

There is great wisdom in this rather short prayer, far too much to discuss now. Let this be a meditation for us all.

Dr. Seuss' Grinch eventually came to the realization that Christmas didn't come from a store; that Christmas meant something a little more. If we truly fast, from food and from influences that draw us away from the glory of the Resurrection, perhaps we, just as the Grinch, may realize that fasting isn't about food; that fasting, perhaps, means something a little more. **ECL**





LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

I AM THE FIRST

It is human nature to want to be “the first.” After all, who runs a race to come in second? Sometimes the desire to be first is borne of selflessness and wanting to be of service, like a scientist racing to find the cure to a deadly disease. It may be a sign of the benefits of perseverance and the resilience of the human spirit, like being the first to walk on the moon, scale a mountain, or invent something that will change people’s lives for the better. Yet sometimes the desire to be “the first” is an outgrowth of pride, our sense of entitlement, or the need to have our ego massaged. Whether we call it *being first*, the favorite, a rising star or “the best of the best,” chasing after first place may not always be what we expected.

The Apostles James and John learned this the hard way (cf. Mark 10:34-37). One day they came to Jesus and asked if they could be *first* (and second) next to Him. They were asking to become Jesus’ favorites, putting them above the others. Imagine the nerve (or naiveté) to approach the Lord with such a request. Jesus entertains their appeal, asking if they are willing to do what it takes to be *number one* (v.38). They readily answer “Yes!” but James and John have no understanding of what they’re asking. The brothers, whom today we call *Saint*, at that time were still living by worldly standards. To share in God’s glory in eternity is a gift, not a right or a prize. Jesus responds, “The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized...” (v. 39), and the men will soon learn that they are not above their Master.

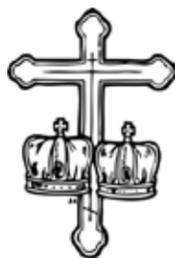
Do you ever find it difficult to say “I’m sorry” – to your spouse, a family member, or a friend? Maybe it’s tough to utter those words because we’re embarrassed and ashamed of our behavior. We may be clinging to a particular sin (pride, dishonesty, self-righteousness) that an apology would force us to abandon. We might resist saying “I’m sorry” because we have *dug in* so firmly to our position that we can’t possibly see the other person’s perspective, or how we’ve hurt them. Finally, we may fear our bid for forgiveness will be rejected. For most of us it’s probably a combination of all of these, along with the realization that we ourselves are sinners. We know this fact “on paper,” and can easily give an account of Jesus’ sacrifice on the Cross. We can explain how God became man to save us, to forgive our sins and restore our relationship with Him. But when it comes to probing our hearts, being brutally honest about our shortcomings and how we have failed to live in gratitude for that sacrifice, we suddenly lose our nerve. Or we devise rationalizations and excuses for our attitudes and behavior.

If we find it hard to say “sorry” to someone we’ve wronged, for fear of their reaction or due to our pride, how much more might we find it hard to ask *God’s* forgiveness! How many times do we plan to go to Confession, only to have “something come up” that puts it off for another week...or month...or even years. Who among us has not examined our conscience and glossed over an incident where we were angry, selfish, or actively hurt another? Have we never *finessed* the way we confess a particular sin, perhaps adding so much context that we try to win the priest confessor to our side, arguing that it wasn’t *really* our fault, or that what we did, thought or said wasn’t all *that bad*? We may think we’re fooling our confessor (we’re not), but we are certainly not fooling God, “who knows the secrets of the heart.” (Psalm 44:22) Why do we try so hard to either avoid examining our conscience to surface our faults and do the real work necessary to change; or cast our sinfulness as ultimately the result of someone else’s failing? Perhaps the answer lies in our unwillingness to “be first” where it really counts.

“O Lord I believe and profess that You are truly Christ, the Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners, *of whom I am the first.*” This is our prayer at every Divine Liturgy before receiving the precious and life-giving Body and Blood of Christ. Most of us know it by heart, yet we may take the words for granted, having uttered them hundreds, maybe thousands of times. Perhaps each of us must contemplate more deeply the opening line of the prayer, recalling the usual association of being *first* with competition and winning. Think about James’ and John’s ambition to *be first* alongside Jesus, without understanding what would be required of them. Now look once more at the Prayer before Communion, and reflect on its opening words, considering what each one means for us *personally*.

“O Lord I believe and profess.” Think about the power of those words, both a statement of faith and a pledge to boldly witness to the living God. “He came into the world *to save.*” Take a few moments to consider the gravity of such a self-emptying and generous act.

Jesus came *to save sinners!* He did not suffer and die for an abstract idea, but to enter into our human experience to transform it; to transform *us*. Now, go further to reckon with the words that should most challenge and convict us to ask for God’s grace and the humility to seek conversion. Jesus came “to save sinners” – and here is the painful yet necessary part – “of whom *I am the first.*” Sit with that acknowledgment, lean into it but have no fear! Rather, *be the first* to admit, confess and repent of sin, for God is *always the first* to welcome us back with open arms. **ECL**



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Sponsored by the Syncellate for the State of New Jersey

When? Saturday, March 20, 2021. 9am to 4pm.

Where? Via Zoom.

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PRESENTERS

Deacon Thomas Shubeck PhD and his wife Caroline are navigating the pandemic with a young adult daughter and a teen-aged son. Deacon Tom serves at St Thomas the Apostle parish in Rahway and at Seton Hall University. Much of his more than 30 years as a licensed psychologist has been spent providing therapy services to married couples and families.



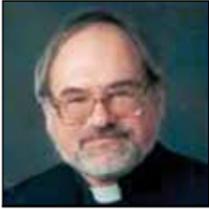
Ann Koshute MTS, earned a Master’s degree at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family in Washington DC. She teaches theology at St Joseph’s College of Maine and co-founded Springs in the Desert, an infertility support ministry. She and her husband Keith have been married for 9 years.

Michael and Lisann Castagno were married in 1994 and have three daughters. They have been involved in marriage preparation and youth ministry in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for many years, speaking especially about the beauty of God’s design for marriage, by proclaiming the good news of Natural Family Planning.



Fr. Jack Custer has delighted in preparing couples for marriage over four decades of priesthood. He holds degrees in Scripture and Theology and currently serves as Rector of St Michael’s Cathedral.

For more information, contact
St Michael’s Cathedral office
973-777-2553 or
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THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE ANAPHORA: NOT FOR JUDGMENT

In the Anaphora, we pray and implore God to send the Holy Spirit upon our offerings of the created works of bread and wine that they may become the Body and Blood of our Lord, so that when we partake of them, we, in turn, are transformed by His grace and power. The gifts then become for us, communion, that is, unity and fellowship in the Spirit of God, for the forgiveness of our sins, allowing us to be united with Him, and to attain to the fullness of His Kingdom, which is working with God to bring about His plan for our world, in faith and love.

The Anaphora also tells us how we should receive this gift. Indeed, we can receive it properly only by the grace of God, and so we ask God for the ability to receive His love for us. Therefore, the first effect that we seek in the epiclesis is “a spirit of vigilance.” The Christian must be “watchful” of his or her soul, and “sober” at all times. This is interesting advice for a culture that emphasizes living life to its fullest, and is prone to addiction, the opposite of watchfulness and sobriety in all its forms. The latter should be the marks of a Christian: “Let us not be asleep like the rest, but awake and sober... We who live by day must be alert, putting on faith and love as a breastplate and the hope of salvation as a helmet” (1 Thessalonians 5:6-8; see also 1 Peter 1:13 and 5:8; 2 Timothy 4:5). In other words, spiritual vigilance is a gift of the Holy Spirit, so that the Christian can be well-balanced, self-controlled, and self-possessed under all circumstances. This is certainly very difficult in the present age, and probably was pretty difficult in any age, but remains the ideal for the life in Christ. Saint John Chrysostom observes: “When the priesthood is under discussion, you [should only have such men] as, after mixing and associating with all, keep their purity undefiled, and their unworldliness, their holiness, constancy and sobriety unshaken, and to possess all other virtues which belong to hermits in a greater degree than they.” (*On the Priesthood* 6, 8) The priest prays for this gift for himself and for all Christians.

At the end of the Epiclesis, we again pray for the grace to accept God’s gifts. To accept the gifts of forgiveness, communion, fellowship and the kingdom requires courage on the part of the person of faith. It should become abundantly clear that one who receives communion in the Holy Spirit cannot be a weakling. The Spirit is the wisdom and the power of God. He drives out all sin, purifies the soul and conscience and empowers the mission of the Church to bring about the fullness of all creation. We no longer live in fear and doubt. The anaphora is the commemoration of the resurrection of the Lord, which filled the apostles with confidence after the fearful days of the passion and burial.

The Acts of the Apostles describes the effect this had on the disciples, “And now, Lord, take note of their (that is, of Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel] threats, and enable Your servants to speak your word with all boldness, as You stretch forth [Your] hand to heal, and signs and wonders are done through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.” (Acts 4:29) Thus, the last gift we pray for in the epiclesis is for “boldness,” or “confidence,” (Greek, *parresia*). For the fathers, “confidence,” was one of the gifts of Adam in Paradise, and which was lost by sin. With the coming of Christ, this confidence is regained. Thus, Saint Paul wrote, “In Christ and through faith in Him we can speak freely to God, drawing near Him with confidence.” (Ephesians 3:12) This confidence is often identified with “freedom of speech.” The Christian is the one who fearlessly proclaims the truth and salvation of Christ.

The gift of “confidence” is often connected with the Lord’s Prayer. In Christ, we can now “make bold” to call God our Father. So confidence is also needed to pray the “Our Father.” The Byzantine Rite introduces the Lord’s Prayer with the words, “And grant, O Lord, that we may with confidence, without condemnation dare call upon You, Father, the God of heaven, and say.” A similar introduction is found in almost all rites. The epiclesis now ends with the words, “and not for judgment or condemnation.” This negative petition seems to be in apposition to the final fruit, “confidence.” Saint Basil’s epiclesis has the same idea, “...that none of us partake of the holy body and blood of your Christ for judgment or condemnation,” and may be founded on Saint Paul’s warning, “He who eats and drinks without recognizing the body eats and drinks judgment on himself” (1 Corinthians 11:29). The Lord’s Prayer was added into the Liturgy later,

and the epiclesis prayer, ending with a petition for “confidence,” was naturally seen as a good introduction to it.

The epiclesis, therefore, is certainly one of the most significant points of the Divine Liturgy. It is found in some form in the most ancient liturgical texts we have, because they are based on the ways of prayer of the Jewish faith, which always included an invocation to God for His blessing. Of course, all actions of God toward His Creation are the work of the Trinity, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit together. Likewise, all the gifts of God that are given to us and all the powers of our soul to accept and to act upon these gifts come not from our own powers but in and with God, as the epiclesis of Saint Basil teaches, not because of our righteousness, for we have done nothing good on earth, but because of Your mercy and compassion so richly poured out upon us.” **ECL**

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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

Father Jack Custer, S.S.L., S.T.D.

THE SORT OF DEATH HE WOULD DIE

Twice in Saint John's Gospel, Jesus predicts His Crucifixion and the evangelist notes that "He said this to indicate the sort of death He would die" (John 12:33; John 18:32; Matthew, Mark and Luke record something similar: Jesus tells His disciples on at least three occasions that the Son of Man "must" be handed over to the Gentiles, and put to death (e.g., Matthew 16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19). Why did Jesus' death have to take place exactly as it did?

Although Jesus was arrested and first arraigned by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish court in Jerusalem, He was not put to death by Jews. Jewish law prescribes death by stoning. At the time of Jesus' death, the Sanhedrin had lost the power to execute such a sentence, and so Jesus was turned over to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate (John 18:31).

There are three important details in this fact. First, Jesus was rejected by official Israel (the Sanhedrin) and by the people (Matthew 27:20-23) just as Isaiah (53:1-3) had predicted the "Servant of the Lord" would be. Secondly, this judicial transfer means that Jewish and Gentile powers collaborated to put Jesus to death: the Sanhedrin, Pontius

Pilate, and Herod. The earliest Church recognized how this unusual collaboration fulfilled what Psalm 2 had predicted: "Why do the nations rage and the people utter folly? They gather together against the Lord and against His Anointed" (Acts 4:25-27). Thirdly, handing Jesus over to Roman law means that He would die by crucifixion rather than beheading (the penalty for Roman citizens) or stoning (the Jewish penalty).

Jesus' crucifixion with nails (Colossians 2:14) in His hands and feet (Psalm 22:16), preceded by a brutal scourging and ending in the piercing of His heart, effectively drained His body of blood. The Epistle to the Hebrews (9:11-15) makes clear, Jesus willing death on the Cross was, therefore, a sacrifice of blood (Matthew 26:28) just as the Old Testament law prescribed for the remission of sins on the annual Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16).

Despite their explicit plan to the contrary (Matthew 26:5; Mark 14:2) the Jerusalem leadership had Jesus put to death during the feast of Passover. Saint John especially highlights how Jesus fulfills the function of Passover Lamb. Pilate pronounced the sentence at pre-

cisely the moment when the slaughter of the lambs could begin (according to John's calendar; John 19:14). Saint John also notes how Jesus' legs were not broken like those of the two thieves, just as the Law prohibits breaking any of the bones of the Passover lamb (John 19:33-36).

Jesus insisted that He must be "lifted up" as Moses had lifted up a bronze serpent on his staff (John 3:14-15). The bronze serpent was the remedy the Lord prescribed to save the Israelites from the deadly serpents He had sent to punish their complaining; all who looked at it were healed (Numbers 21:4-9). The "cure" resembled the "disease." Saint Paul (2 Corinthians 5:21) says something similar about Jesus, ostensibly an ostracized criminal, crucified under Jewish law as a blasphemer and under Roman law as a false king: "He (God) made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us."

Jesus' lifting up on the Cross is also an act of exaltation. The Gospels make no mention of the physical suffering of Christ apart from the single statement "I thirst" (John 19:28). Saint Paul expresses the Gospel view of the Passion when he writes that Christ "obediently

accepted even death, death on the cross. Therefore, God highly exalted Him" (Philippians 2:8-9). The Crucifixion is the triumph of God's saving will (John 8:28), a heroic feat of Jesus' human will (Luke 22:42-44; John 12:27-28), the end of the law (Romans 10:4; Galatians 3:13), the birth of the Church, and the source of the sacraments (John 19:30-34): the Spirit, the blood and the water; see also 1 John 5:6-8). Pilate may have meant it sarcastically, but he wrote the truth: "The King of the Jews" (John 19:19-20). Saint Paul calls Christ on the Cross "the Lord of Glory" (1 Corinthians 2:8).

The request of some "Greeks" to see Jesus (John 12:20-21) prompts Jesus to say, "when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32). With His arms outstretched on the Cross, Jesus reaches out to the four corners of the world. Our liturgical hymns for the third Sunday of the Fast and the Exaltation of the Holy Cross describe it as reaching out to the four corners of the world, or as a beacon drawing the whole world toward its light. **ECL**

SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian



PRAY FOR HUMILITY

Spiritual growth depends to a great extent on humility. The saints consider humility to be the foundation of all virtue. It was pride that turned the chief angel, Lucifer, into the devil (Is. 14:3), and it is our pride that threatens to destroy us. "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr. 16:18). Just as humility is the root of all holiness, so pride is the foundation of every sin. "Humility makes men angels, and pride makes angels devils," says Saint Augustine.

Our Lord demonstrated humility by His birth in a cave at Bethlehem, His hidden life for thirty years with Mary and Joseph, His occupation as a carpenter (Mk. 6:3), and especially His Passion and Death on the Cross. Christ even tried to remain obscure during His earthly ministry, when after healing a leper, He tells him, "See that you say nothing to anyone" (Mt. 8:4). "Though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:6-8).

Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary, being the perfect imitation of Christ, excelled all other creatures in humility. Saint Bernardine of Sienna says that "after the Son of God, no creature in the world was so exalted as Mary because no creature in the world ever humbled itself so much as she did." She praises God, saying, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden" (Lk 1:46-48).

Jesus Christ teaches His disciples to practice humility. He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:3), and "everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Lk. 18:14) and "learn from Me; for I am gentle and humble in heart" (Mt. 11:29).

The Holy Apostles Peter, Paul, and James direct us to embrace humility. "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1 Pt. 5:5). "In humility count others better than yourselves" (Phil. 2:3). Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you" (Js. 4:10).

Saint Anthony of Egypt relates: "I saw the snares that the enemy spread over the world, and I said groaning, "What can get through such snares?" Then I heard a voice saying to me, "Humility."

Are you humble? "He who thinks himself to be humble is no longer so," says the eighteenth-century Italian missionary, Cajetan Mary de Bergamo. Saint Francis de Sales says, "To put up with insults and offenses is the touchstone of humility and true virtue." Saint Teresa says, "Don't think that you have advanced far in holiness until you consider yourself the worst of all and desire to be placed below all."

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst" (1 Tim. 1:15). Like Saint Paul, all the great saints saw themselves as the worst of sinners. How can we see ourselves as the worst of sinners? Let us say to ourselves: "If that notorious sinner received the graces I received throughout my life (background, family, faith, inspirations of grace, etc.), he would be a much better Catholic Christian than I am." According to Saint Thomas Aquinas, a person can genuinely and honest-

ly say that he is the worst of all sinners because of the hidden defects and sins he knows he possesses in himself and the gifts of God hidden in others.

Let us examine our consciences and bring our sins to Confession at least monthly, not only to acquire forgiveness but also to grow in self-knowledge and humility. Even outside the Sacrament of Confession, for many people who struggle with pride, it is good to recall and confess the sins of our past life (but not in detail) to grow in humility. Warning: this is not for everybody.

Most importantly, let us pray for humility. Pray Cardinal Merry Del Val's "Litany of Humility." Meditate on "A Confession Which Leads the Inward Man To Humility" in the Way of the Pilgrim. In prayer, let us confess that we are prideful and ask God to show us our true selves so that with all the great saints, we can see ourselves as the worst of sinners.

"Humble yourself greatly, for the punishment of the ungodly is fire and worms" (Sir. 7:17). **ECL**

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN: A PRAYER FOR ALL SEASONS



Icon of Saint Ephraim, the Syrian

As we enter the time of the Great Fast, our prayers take a more penitential turn. Our liturgical cycle becomes more penitential, as we anticipate the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil on Sundays, Presanctified Liturgies during the week, with other services such as Lenten Moleben, Paraklesis, and other prayers that help our focus to stay on Lenten disciplines. One of my favorite prayers during this season is the Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian:

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. (Prostration)

Instead, bestow on me, Your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. (Prostration)

Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for You are blessed forever and ever. Amen. (Prostration)

It is a corporate prayer of the Presanctified Liturgy, yet it is a deeply personal and individual prayer. And although it is one confined to the Lenten season, it should be a prayer that we always keep on our lips and in our hearts and in all places. Each line serves to teach us, to humble us, and to lead us to a closer walk with God. The main point of this prayer is to focus on our own sins, our own shortcomings, and our own spiritual walk. Each sentence is accompanied by a prostration, as we totally humble ourselves before God.

First, seeing how broken we are as human beings as we stand before God, we ask Him to spare us from the sins of indifference to our spiritual state as well as in our relationships with one another. This is followed by a petition that we do not despair as we try to imitate our Lord Jesus Christ and His saints more closely. Next, we ask that we not

be blinded by a desire for earthly acclaim, or for temporal riches and honors. Lastly, we ask for the grace to keep us from gossip and talk that serves no heavenly purpose.

In place of all these, we ask our Lord for personal integrity in what we say and do; that our actions mirror our words. We know it when we say that someone doesn't "practice what he preaches," but do we apply that to ourselves as well? We ask for humility, which washes away all pride. In Saint Paul's letter to the Philippians, he encourages us to "[d]o nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Phil. 2:3,4) To the Romans he writes, "...love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor." (Rom. 12:10) In just these two passages, we can see the practical application of how to have the spirit of humility.

Ephraim further exhorts us to pray to God for the spirit of patience, one of the Seven Spiritual Virtues. With humility, patience can follow, patience

in situations, patience in dealing with others. It is easy to see how patience stems from pride and self-centeredness because we are thinking of ourselves, our desires, our expectations, and putting ourselves before others. And ultimately, if we are humble and patient, it is then that we can truly love others.

In the last sentence of this simple prayer, we find the fruit of all that has come before. "Let me see my own sins, and not judge my brothers and sisters." In our spiritual life, nothing can be more important in seeking to be conformed to the image of Christ. If we are so caught up in looking at what bad sinners other people are, if we are constantly comparing ourselves to others like the Pharisee in the parable: "God, I thank You that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector," (Luke 18:11), then we will be unable to attain our salvation.

So, the Prayer of Saint Ephraim is not merely a prayer for the Lenten Season, but a prayer for all seasons. May it always be in our hearts and on our lips.

ECL

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 Saint John the Baptist—Trumbull, CT

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 Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ—Radio
 Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Perth Amboy, NJ
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Perth Amboy, NJ
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hillsborough, NJ
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunellen, NJ
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 Nativity of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—East Brunswick, NJ
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 Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church—Linden, NJ
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 Saint Mary Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Saint Mary Pokrova—Kingston, PA

Saint John Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic—Mahanoy City, PA
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 Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church—Lansford, PA
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Bethlehem, PA
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Old Forge, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Taylor, PA
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Minersville, PA
 Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunmore, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
 Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
 Holy Dormition Friary—Sybertsville, PA
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 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Levittown, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Scranton, PA
 Saint Ann Byzantine Catholic Church—Harrisburg, PA

GEORGIA

Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Roswell, GA

VIRGINIA

Ascension of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Williamsburg, VA
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Virginia Beach, VA
 Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Annandale, VA

FLORIDA

Holy Dormition Byzantine Catholic Church—Ormond Beach, FL
 Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church—Orlando FL
 Saint Anne Byzantine Catholic Church—New Port Richey, FL
 Saint Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Fort Pierce, FL
 Our Lady of the Sign Byzantine Catholic Church—Coconut Creek, FL

NORTH CAROLINA

Saints Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Cary, NC
 The Outreach Community of Greater Charlotte

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charlotte, NC, Byzantine Catholic Mission at Fort Mill, SC

MARYLAND

Patronage of the Mother of God Byzantine Catholic Church—Arbutus, MD
 Saint Gregory of Nyssa Byzantine Catholic Church—Beltsville, MD

Monthly Byzanteen Gatherings

January 17th Sunday of Zaccheus
 Sunday's @ 6pm

February 21st Sunday of Orthodoxy

March 21st St. Mary of Egypt

April 18th Sunday of the Myrrhbearers

May 16th Power of the Holy Spirit

June 13th Saints of all Time and for all Time

July 1st - 4th Byzanteen Rally

For Monthly Meetings: FrDeaconTom@gmail.com

Byzanteen Rally
 Last day of Early Registration: May 1st - \$325
 Last day of Registration: June 16th - \$350

Mount St. Mary's
 "Soaring on Eagles Wings"

UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

Eastern Catholic Life

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MARCH, 2021

- 6 Third All Souls' Saturday
- 7 Third Sunday of the Great Fast
Veneration of the Holy Cross
- 13 Fourth All Souls' Saturday
- 14 Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast
Sunday of the Ladder of Divine Ascent
- 20 Akathistos Saturday
- 21 Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast
Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt
- 25 Holy Annunciation of the Theotokos
*Solemn Holy Day * Chancery closed*
- 27 Saturday of Lazarus
- 28 Flowery Sunday
- 29 Great and Holy Monday
- 30 Great and Holy Tuesday
- 31 Great and Holy Wednesday

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC
 subscribes to the

*Charter for the Protection of
 Children and Young People*

adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and young people that conforms to Charter requirements. For further information regarding the Eparchial Safe Environment Program please contact:

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