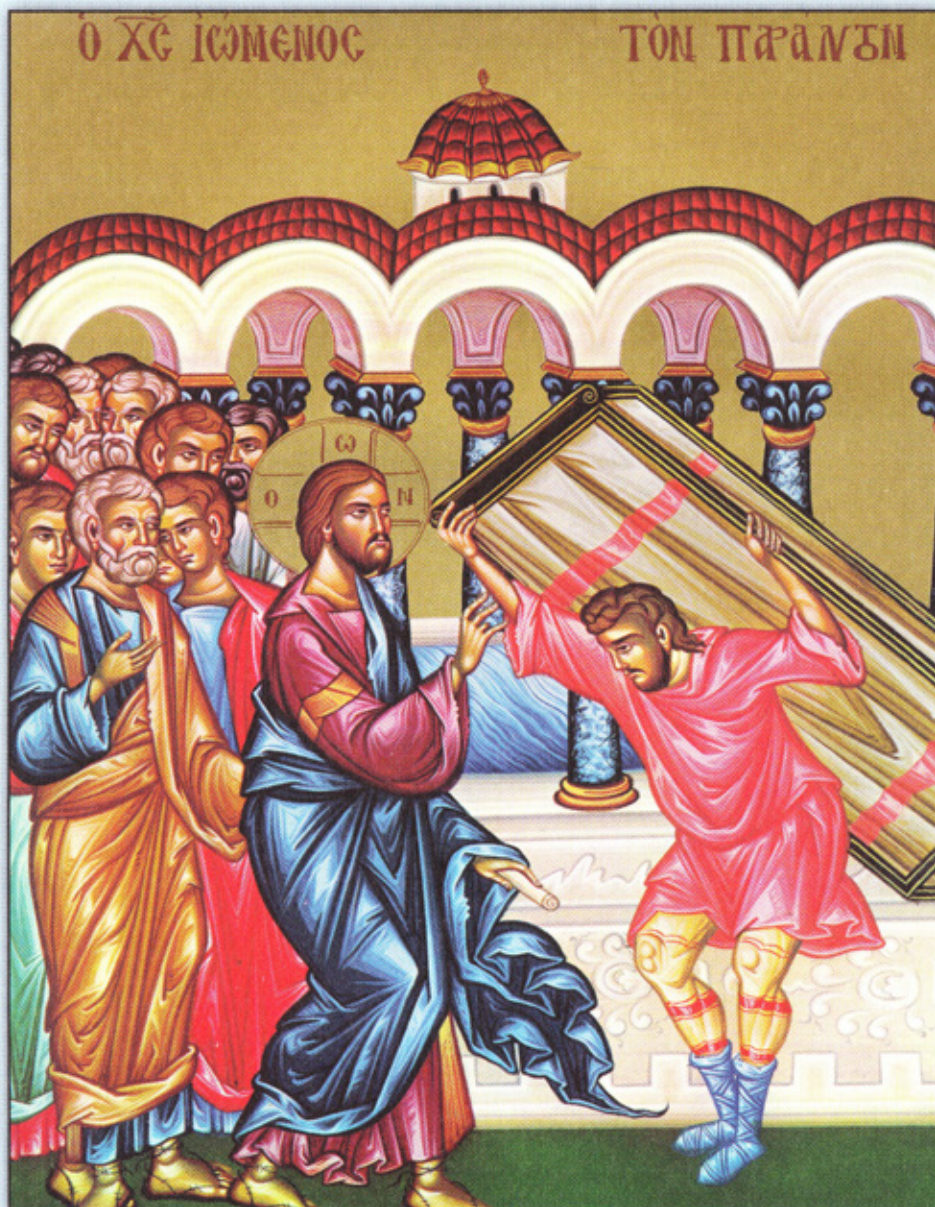


SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC



Icon of Christ and the Paralytic Man at the Pool of Bethesda

May 11, 2014

SYNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

*OUR HOLY FATHERS, EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES, CYRIL AND METHODIUS, TEACHERS OF THE SLAVS;
COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING OF CONSTANTINOPLE; THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR MOCIUS;
PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE OF BLESSED VASYL (BASIL) HOPKO, AUXILIARY BISHOP OF PRESVOV (+1976)*

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 12 – MAY 18

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14 – *MID-PENTECOST; THE HOLY MARTYR ISIDORE OF CHIOS*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy + Joseph Bankston

SATURDAY, MAY 17

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy + Yaroslava

4:00 PM – Great Vespers & Ordination to the Subdiaconate

SUNDAY, MAY 18 – *SYNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN; THE HOLY MARTYR THEODOTUS OF ANCYRA; THE HOLY MARTYRS PETER, DIONYSIUS, ANDREW, PAUL AND CHRISTINA OF LAMPACUS; THE SEVEN HOLY VIRGINS: ALEXANDRA, TECUSA, CLAUDIA, PHAINE, EUPHRASIA, MATRONA AND JULIA*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Diaconal Ordination For Frank Avant & All Parishioners

HITLER MAY HAVE WANTED TO STEAL TURIN SHROUD, CHURCH EXPERT SAYS

From DirectionsToOrthodoxy.org on Fri Apr 09 2010

ROME (CNS) -- The Shroud of Turin was hidden in an Italian Benedictine abbey during World War II in part because church authorities feared Adolf Hitler might want to steal it, according to an official at the monastery.

The shroud, which many believe to have been the burial cloth of Christ, was transferred secretly from the Turin cathedral in 1939 to the abbey of Montevergine in southern Italy, and returned to Turin in 1946, after the war had ended.

Officially, the reason later given for the transfer was fear that the cloth could have been damaged if the city of Turin were bombed. But Benedictine Father Andrea Cardin, director of the Montevergine library that holds the relevant documents, said church officials also seemed to fear that the Nazis wanted to take possession of the Shroud.

Already in 1938, church leaders were alarmed when, during a visit by Hitler to Italy, Nazi officials asked unusual and persistent questions about the shroud and its custody, Father Cardin said in an interview published in April by the Italian magazine "Diva e Donna."

That worried the Vatican as well as the Italian royal family, the Savoy, who at the time

were the owners of the shroud, Father Cardin said. Hitler was thought by some to have been obsessed about certain objects related to the life of Christ, including the Holy Grail and the Holy Lance of Longinus.

The Savoy family wanted the Vatican to take the shroud during the war, but Pope Pius XII thought that was not a good idea. Instead, in near total secrecy, the Vatican arranged for the cloth to be brought first to Rome and then to the Montevergine abbey near Avellino, where it was hidden under the main altar.

In 1943, as fighting raged in southern Italy, Nazi soldiers arrived at Montevergine and conducted a thorough search of the abbey premises. The monks withdrew in prayer around the altar, and a Nazi official gave the order not to disturb them. "In this way, the holy relic was not discovered," Father Cardin said.

The shroud, which bears the image of an apparently crucified man, goes on display at various times in the Turin cathedral, where it is kept permanently. The Italian monarchy was abolished in Italy in 1946, and the shroud was formally given to the Vatican in 1983.

POPE CALLS CHRISTIANS TO ‘BEAR WITNESS,’ EVEN IF IT MEANS ‘LAYING DOWN ONE’S LIFE’

Pope Francis warned the church against being a “school of religion,” saying it needs more than “great ideas,” “beautiful temples” and “fine museums” - Christians need to “bear witness” - witness that might even include “persecution and death.”

The Pope’s remarks came during a homily yesterday, where he used the example of the martyrdom of St. Steven to emphasize that the Christian who does not witness his faith in real life becomes sterile, Vatican Radio reported.

“We are not a religion of ideas, of pure theology, beautiful things, of commandments. No, we are a people who follow Jesus Christ and bear witness - who want to bear witness to Jesus Christ - and sometimes this witness leads to laying down our lives.”

“Martyrdom is the translation of a Greek word that also means witness,” Pope Francis said. And so we can say that for a Christian the path follows in the footsteps of this witness, Christ’s footsteps, to bear witness to Him and, many times, this witness ends up in laying down one’s life. You cannot understand a Christian without witness.”

Pope Francis also quoted one of Church fathers which said: “The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.” “By their witness, they preach the faith,” Francis added. “Witness, be it in everyday life, in difficulties, and even in persecution and death, always bears fruit. The Church is fruitful and a mother when she witnesses to Jesus Christ.”

On the other hand, “When the church closes in on itself, when it thinks of itself as a - so to speak - ‘school of religion,’ with so many great ideas, with many beautiful temples, with many fine museums, with many beautiful things, but does not give witness, it becomes sterile.”

Francis exhorted Christians and the church alike to avoid this sterility. And he challenged listeners to ponder their own witness to the faith compared to that of Steven, who was martyred, and the Christians who fled after his death. “Am I a Christian who witnesses to Jesus or are a simple numerary in this sect?”

Please Note:

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



Congratulations!

to all those celebrating the civil holiday of “Mother’s Day” – mothers, grandmothers, mothers-in-law, godmothers –

Многая і Благая Літа!

Many Blessed Years!

Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors!
It’s good to have you with us!

“CHRIST IS RISEN. WELL, SO WHAT?”

It's the greatest message that humanity has ever heard.

Its also the most ignored message in the world.

I look out in the post-Pascha world and little has changed. The war goes on, gas prices continue to rise, and the rats are still running the race. A poor woman was just found in a basement with her children, and she had been a prisoner there for 25 years. Christ is risen. You might think it impious of me, but I must ask: Well, so what?

It's one of the most amazing and perplexing passages of Scripture. “Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.” (Matthew 28:16-17, NKJV)

“Some doubted.” Doubted? How in the world could this be possible? It's like some of them are actually looking at the Resurrected Lord and asking, “Well, so what?” I am absolutely sure that if I saw the Resurrected Lord with my own eyes, I would believe. After all, I've heard that “seeing is believing.” I'm sure that I would believe and I would change. I would be faithful. Wouldn't I?

Maybe not.

After all, despite the glory of Pascha, I am still an unrepentant sinner. I am worse than St. Thomas because he touched the Lord's flesh once and proclaimed, “My Lord and my God.” Eventually, Thomas made it all the way to India. I touch the Lord's Body and Blood every Sunday and have done so

for over 12 years, and I've hardly made it out of my house.

So, maybe the world ignores the greatest message of all time because **the witness of my life** is that He is still dead and I remain a slave to sin. Why does the stone remain over the tomb for me? What power keeps the stone from rolling away?

In Hebrews, chapter 2, it says, “...through death He (Jesus) might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

Now, this is interesting. So, it is the fear of death that binds me and blinds me and makes me a slave to sin. Well, I don't spend most of my day worrying about my physical death, but I do worry about a lot of things. Yet, I thought it was the fact that sin was fun or pleasurable that bound me to it. No, to be honest, beneath it all is fear. As I think about the Lord's life, how many times did the angels say, “don't be afraid?” **How many times did the Lord Himself say, “Be not afraid?”** Am I afraid, really?

Yes, I am.

For example, I live to eat, not eat to live. Why do I eat so much? Am I afraid that I won't get enough to eat? Perhaps, its because deep in my heart I am afraid – maybe I'm not really loved; maybe I'm ugly; **maybe I really am a failure.** I find I can eat and kill this hunger and pain in a carbohydrate haze. After all, a bag of Oreo cookies and a tall glass of cold milk can make me feel real good.

Another example is that I judge others because it makes me feel superior to them. I need to feel superior because **I am afraid that people will see what an utter fool I really am.** I know exactly why the Pharisee was glad that he was not “like that man.” I’m glad too because it eases the fear that I am a fool and hypocrite. Afterall, I can’t be too bad when there are so many people who are obviously more sinful and more foolish than I.

I could go on and on, but I think you get the point. **Fear permeates every aspect of life and it lies at the foundation of every habitual sin that plagues us.** It was that way for our Parents. When Adam and Eve broke God’s commandment, they hid in the bushes because they were afraid. When you think that previously they had “walked with God in the cool of the evening”, how sad that they hid themselves from their Father. In the Icon of the Resurrection, Adam and Eve come from the shadows with great joy. Yet, some still hide in the semi-darkness.

Like Adam and Eve, I’m hiding because of fear, and it’s fear that binds me. Even though I proclaim with my lips, Christ is Risen, my heart is wrapped in chains. Is there no help?

Orthodoxy proclaims that Christ “trampled down death by death and upon those in the tombs, He bestowed life.” By trampling down death, **he destroys the binding power of death, which is fear.** He defeated the one who wields this power, the devil. **This means that my fears, though real to me, have no real power.** To know this, I have to be willing to open the dark corners of my soul to the light

of the Resurrection. One way that I begin to do this is by confession which allows me to begin to come out from my hiding place in the bushes.

I remember hearing this story when I was young. Apparently, almost 10 years after World War II had ended, a lone Japanese soldier was found on a small island in the Pacific Ocean. He had spent a decade believing that the war was still going on, and so he stood his post and every day watched for the enemy.

I’m just like that poor soldier. Christ has won the war and the enemy has been defeated. The problem is, I haven’t heard the good news yet. Well, I’ve heard it, but I just don’t believe it. **Lord, I believe, help my unbelief** (*Mark 9:24*).

Maybe next Pascha, I will truly hear the Good News. The grave will open for me and the Risen Lord will stand before me and I will worship Him and not doubt. Maybe then I will know the glorious freedom of Christ. Maybe I will take the same hand that he extends to Adam and Eve and to the whole world. Then, I will proclaim the great message “Christ is Risen”, and those who hear it will believe because they will see that **the message has transformed the messenger from a slave to fear into a slave of God.**

The President was right – “There is nothing to fear but fear itself.” John the Revelator heard it from the Lord – “Be not afraid...I hold the keys of Death and Hell.”

Truly He is Risen!

Source: Ramblings of a Redneck Priest

MIDFEAST OF PENTECOST

The time of Pentecost is 50 days. Indeed, the word Pentecost, means “fifty.” In the middle of the feast, that is on the 25th day, always a Wednesday, we celebrate the feast known as Mid-Pentecost. The feast unites and connects Pascha (the beginning) with Pentecost (the ending).

The symbol of water provides the theme for the feast of Mid-Pentecost. “Whoever is thirsty should come to Me and drink.” As the Scriptures says, “Whoever believes in Me, streams of life-giving water will pour out from his heart.” Christ said this about the Spirit which those who believe in Him were going to receive (John 7:37-38). This passage is also part of the Gospel reading for the Sunday of Pentecost.

Anticipating the gift of the Holy Spirit by Christ, the Troparion and Kontakion of Mid-Pentecost express the yearning of the believer with these words:

Troparion

In the middle of the Feast, O Savior, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of godliness, as Thou didst cry to all: If anyone thirsts let him come to Me and drink! O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!

Kontakion

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: Come and draw the water of immortality! We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: Grant us Thy bounties, for Thou art the Fountain of our life.

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THE ICON OF MID-PENTECOST

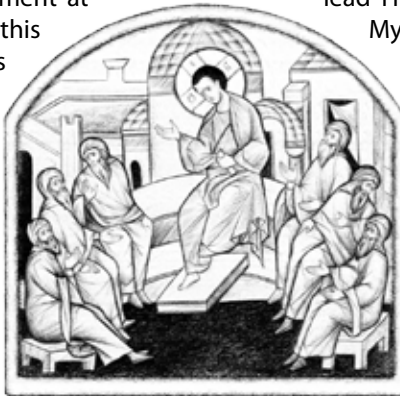
From the Incarnate God – Volume 2

The iconography adopted by the Church to illustrate Mid-Pentecost shows us Jesus Christ teaching in the Temple, just as in the Gospel. Christ is sitting at the center of a circle of Jewish scholars and wise men. These express their amazement at His knowledge: “How is it that this Man has learning, when He has never studied?” (John 7:15). In answer to this question, Jesus speaks of His connection to the Father, of His divine origin.

Most often, the icons of Mid-Pentecost represent Christ’s first encounter in the Temple with the doctors of the Law – this is the episode described by St. Luke, when Jesus was twelve years old (Luke 2:41-50).

“Did you not know that I must be in My Father’s house?” He says to His worried parents, thus openly declaring that He is the Son of God and that He must carry out His mission. On that day, Christ

declares His independence from Joseph and Mary, escaping their tutelage. He tells them about His unique link with God the Father. He accepts filial obedience to the end, an obedience which will lead Him all the way to the Cross. “Not My will, but Thy will be done!” (Luke 22:42).



Divine Wisdom is revealed to the doctors of the Law who admire the wisdom of the Child, revealing Jesus as the Child-Emmanuel announced by the Prophets (Isaiah 7:14). The authority of His teaching is already confirmed during His infancy, for “He is before all things,” He precedes creation (Colossians 1:17 and Proverbs

8:22-30), “He is begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father” (the Creed). He is “the Wisdom, the Word, and the Power of God” (From Matins of Pascha).

A Mother's Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ our God Who came into this world not to be ministered to but to minister and to give Your life as a ransom for many. Help me, I beseech You in my ministry of caring for the children You have given me. Enable me to be patient in tribulations, to instruct with a meek and gentle spirit, to reprimand with inner tranquility and a sober mind, and to serve in humility of heart with love. May I thus live in You alone, by You alone and for You alone showing forth Your virtues and leading my family upon the path of Your saving commandments. That we may glorify You together with Your Father Who is without beginning and Your all-holy Spirit both in this world and that which is to come. Amen.

Looking Ahead:

- ❖ May 17 – Subdiaconal Ordination of Frank Avant
- ❖ May 18 – Diaconal Ordination of Frank Avant
- ❖ May 25 – “Soup’s On” Sunday

Sunday offering for May 4

Amount	Number
\$1.00	1 (loose)
\$5.00	1
\$10.00	1
\$20.00	5
\$25.00	1
\$40.00	3
\$50.00	3
\$75.00	2
\$100.00	1
\$300.00	2
<hr/>	
\$1276.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1201.00
Visitor: \$75.00

Average / parish household (42): \$29.29
Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2125.00
Deficit: (**\$924.00**)

Goal:
\$120000



Pledges:
\$39116

2014

Stewardship Pledges

Pledges received: 18

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

Share 2014

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

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

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Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357
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Jeanine Soucie: (718) 674-4529

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Frank Avant: (760) 805-1667



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Perseverance of the Paralytic

The perseverance of the paralytic was astonishing. He was thirty-eight years old, and each year he hoped to be freed from his disease. He lay there waiting, never giving up. If he had not persevered as much as he did, wouldn't his future prospects, let alone the past, have been enough to discourage him from staying around that place? Consider how alert the other sick people there would be, since no one knew for sure when the waters would be troubled. The lame and the limping could observe it, but how would a blind man? Maybe he learned it from the clamor that arose.

Let us be ashamed then, beloved, let us be ashamed and groan over our excessive laziness. That man had been waiting thirty-eight years without obtaining what he desired, and he still did not withdraw. And he failed, not through any carelessness of his own but through being

oppressed and suffering violence from others. And still he did not give up. We might persist in prayer for something for ten days or so, and if we have not obtained it, we are too lazy afterwards to employ the same energy [as he did].

And yet, we will wait forever on our fellow human beings, fighting and enduring hardships, performing menial labor, all for the chance of something that in the end fails to meet our expectations.

But when it comes to our Master, from whom we are sure to obtain a reward greater than our labors ... we exercise no such diligence in waiting on Him ... For even if we receive nothing from Him, isn't the very fact that we are able to converse with Him continually often the cause of a thousand blessings?

St. John Chrysostom